The Philosophy of the Vedāntasūtra

A Study based on the Evaluation of the Commentaries of Śaṁkara, Rāmānuja and Madhva

S.M. Srinivasa Chari

with a foreword by
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To the Revered Memory of
H.H. Sriranga Satakopa Yatindra Mahadesika
42nd Seer of Ahobila Mutt
with profound respect and gratitude

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Foreword

Most of the Indian philosophical systems in general and the exponents of the Vedānta system in particular are concerned with five basic doctrines. These are: (1) The nature of the Ultimate Reality which is known as Brahman in the Upaniṣads; (2) The nature of the individual soul (*jīvātman*) and its relation to Brahman; (3) The nature of the universe (*jagat*) and its relation to Brahman; (4) The nature of the means (*sādhana*) to attain Brahman; and (5) The nature of the Supreme Goal (*parama puruṣārtha*) known as *mokṣa*. As far as Vedānta is concerned, all the *ācāryas* have acknowledged that the Upaniṣads which mainly deal with the philosophical theories together with the *Brahmasūtras* of Bādarāyaṇa which systematize the Upaniṣadic teachings are the authoritative source-books for understanding these doctrines. Nevertheless, Śaṁkara and his followers among the earliest extant schools, uphold the doctrine of Advaita or *abhedavāda* as the true purport of Vedānta, according to which the undifferentiated Brahman (*nirviśeṣa* Brahma) alone is real, that *jīva* is identical with Brahman and the *jagat* is illusory in character. Bhāskara and his followers, who reject the *nirviśeṣa* Brahmavāda, advocate the theory of *bhedā-bhedavāda*, according to which there is difference-cum-non-difference between Brahman and the two other ontological entities, *jīva* and *jagat*. Some others such as Yādava Prakāśa, advance the theory that Brahman itself evolves into the sentient souls and non-sentient matter. The Dvaitavādins represented by Madhva and his followers, on the contrary, while admitted the reality of *jīva* and *jagat*, maintain absolute difference between Brahman and the *jagat*, Brahman and the souls and also difference between one soul and the other but they do not accept any organic relationship between Brahman and the two other entities. The exponents of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta, associated with Rāmānuja, uphold that Brahman which is *saviśeṣa* or endowed with attributes is the one Reality as organically related to both sentient souls (*cit*) and the non-sentient matter (*acit*) both of which are real (*cid-acid-viśiṣṭa* Brahma). All the *ācāryas,* however, claim that the *Brahmasūtras* support their respective doctrines.

In the light of such conflicting views, each of which differ from the other in respect of the major philosophical theories, a modern student of philosophy is particular to know which individual school of thought is advanced by Bādarāyaṇa in his classic *sūtras.* Obviously, he would not have advocated all the theories. It has to be either one of them or something different from them. With a view to determining which particular school of thought is well reflected in the *Brahmasūtra,* Dr. S.M. Srinivasa Chari has undertaken the hard task of writing the present book under the title *The Philosophy of the Vedāntasūtra.* In this work he attempts to discuss the selected *sūtras* bearing on the five major doctrines of Vedānta. He has dispassionately examined the Bhāṣyas of Śaṁkara, Rāmānuja and Madhva—the three principal extant ancient schools of Vedānta—to find out how far the views of Bādarāyaṇa as expressed in the *sūtras* corroborate the theories advanced by them. On the basis of an objective and indepth evaluation of the comments of the three *ācāryas,* Dr. S.M.S. Chari has sought to establish that the views expressed by Rāmānuja in his classic *Śrībhāṣya* go to conform fully to the *sūtras* of Bādarāyaṇa. He has not allowed any sectarian or preconceived ideas to influence his thesis.

A dispassionate study of the *sūtras* as well explained in this book would bear testimony to the above conclusion. The definition of Brahman as the primary cause of the threefold cosmic process based on the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* and the description of Brahman in terms of distinguishing attributes (*dharmas*) in several *sūtras,* reveal beyond doubt that Bādarāyaṇa conceives Brahman as *saviśeṣa.* A large number of *sūtras* explicitly state that *jīva* is different from Brahman (*bheda-vyapadeśāt*). Even in the state of *mukti, jīva* is stated to be distinct from Brahman (*bhogamātra sāmya*). The specific mention of *jīva* as an *aṁśa* of Brahman by Bādarāyaṇa in order to reconcile *bheda* Śrutis and *abheda* Śrutis is a clear indication that he accepts non-difference between them in the sense that Brahman by virtue of its immanence in the *jīva,* as stated in the *Antaryāmī Brāhmaṇa,* is integrally related to *jīva.* The *sūtras* do not explicitly mention the concept of *māyā* as conceived by Śaṁkara. This term which is used only on *sūtra* refers to the objects of dream only (*māyā-mātra*) but it does not imply that objects of waking state are also illusory. Nor do the *sūtras* speak of the illusory character of the universe. The fact that Bādarāyaṇa employs the term *ananyatva* or non-difference to explain the causal relationship between Brahman and the universe affirms the reality of *jagat* as a *kārya* (effect) of Brahman for the reason that cause and effect are different states of the same one substance. It can, therefore, be established that the system advocated by Bādarāyaṇa is *saviśeṣa* Advaita.

These important points are brought out convincingly by Dr. Chari in his book with unquestionable textual support under ten chapters. The first four chapters discuss comprehensively the nature of Brahman and its distinguishing attributes. The fifth chapter explains how Brahman is the material cause of the universe and the latter as its effect is organically related to the former. The sixth chapter deals with the nature of *jīvātman* and brings out the integral relationship between *jīva* and Brahman, although the two are different by virtue of their intrinsic nature. The seventh chapter discusses the nature of *sādhana* and establishes that *upāsanā* or the unceasing meditation on Brahman along with the *karma* and other ethical requisites is the direct means to *mokṣa.* The eighth chapter brings out the fact that in the state of *mukti, jīva,* after it is liberated from bondage, attains equality with Brahman and enjoys the bliss of Brahman for ever without a return to the mundane existence. The ninth chapter dealing with the Upaniṣads and the *Vedāntasūtras* shows that there is perfect harmony between the two. The final chapter sums up the points of difference and agreement between Bādarāyaṇa and three *ācāryas* in respect of major doctrines and concludes that Bādarāyaṇa upholds Theistic Monism (*saviśeṣa* Advaita) or *viśiṣṭa abhedavāda.*

This is undoubtedly an authoritative and well referenced work written for the first time in English by a distinguished scholar. It will help students of Vedānta to acquire a deeper insight into the teachings of *Vedāntasūtras.*

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Preface

This book attempts to present the Philosophy of Vedānta as enunciated by Bādarāyaṇa in his classic *Vedāntasūtra,* the earliest aphoristic manual on the Vedānta system. Though there is an extensive literature on the Vedānta philosophy contributed by modern scholars, both Indian and Western, besides English translations of *Brahmasūtra* along with the principal commentaries, there is no authoritative book which presents objectively and in a systematic manner, the views of Bādarāyaṇa on Vedānta as enshrined in the *sūtras.* It is generally believed that the cryptic aphorisms expressed in a few words are so vague and incomprehensible that their full import cannot be understood except with the aid of the commentary. Though this observation is partly true, it is possible to make out from the *sūtras* the views of Bādarāyaṇa on the five fundamental doctrines of Vedānta, namely, the nature of Brahman, the nature of the Individual Self and its relation to Brahman, the nature of the Universe and its relation to Brahman, the nature of the means to attain Brahman and the nature of the Supreme Goal. The important and selected *sūtras* related to these theories are not ambiguous. Most of these are formulated on the basis of the passages of the principal Upaniṣads. A dispassionate study of these *sūtras* along with the connected Upaniṣads would reveal the views of Bādarāyaṇa on the major philosophical doctrines. This is the task which is undertaken in the present work.

The scope of this study is confined to the discussion of the selected *adhikaraṇas* that have a direct bearing on the five important doctrines on the basis of an objective evaluation of the comments of Śaṁkara, Rāmānuja and Madhva on the concerned *sūtras.* Without going into the exegetical and doctrinal details as well as the criticisms and counter criticisms of the commentators, an attempt is made to present the essential points that reveal the true purport of these *sūtras* in order to delineate the views of Bādarāyaṇa on the Vedānta philosophy. It is hoped that this book will be found useful to the students of Vedānta to get a deeper insight into the philosophy of the *Vedāntasūtra* and assess which school of Vedānta represents it faithfully.

In the preparation of this book I have drawn material mostly from the original Sanskrit texts—the three basic commentaries on the *Vedāntasūtra* by Śaṁkara, Rāmānuja and Madhva and the major Upaniṣads referred to by them. The subject-matter covered in them is no doubt highly technical and written in terse traditional style replete with subtleties of dialectical arguments, but I have attempted to present the same in as simple and lucid manner as possible to make it comprehensible. In a work of this type the use of the Sanskrit words and quotations is unavoidable, but wherever they are used, an English rendering of them is given along with a glossary of the Sanskrit terms.

It is with great pleasure that I record my obligations. I must first pay my respects to my revered *ācāryas,* the late Sri Gostipuram Sowmyanarayanacharya Swami, the late Sri Madhurantakam Veeraraghavacharya Swami and Sri Saragur Madabhushi Varadacharya Swami, under whom I studied Vedānta in the traditional manner. I am deeply indebted to them. I have derived help and guidance for understanding the crucial *Vedāntsūtras* from the traditional scholars, Sri K.S. Varadacharya of Parakala Mutt, Sri Krishna Jois of Śaṁkara Mutt and Sri D. Prahladachar of Purnaprajna Vidyapeetha. I express my grateful thanks to them. I should also thank my esteemed friends, Dr. N.S. Anantharangachar, Sri Anantanarasimhachar, Sri Krishna Prasad Kalale and Sri S. Srinivasachar who have gone through the major part of the typescript and offered useful suggestions for improvement. My thanks are also due to all those who have helped me in one way or the other and in particular, to my wife and other family members without whose loving cooperation I would not have completed this book in my advanced age. I also express my grateful thanks to the eminent Sanskrit scholar, Sri N.S. Rāmānuja Tatacharya for writing a Foreword to this book.

S.M. SRINIVASA CHARI

Bangalore
1 January 1998

Abbreviations

AA	*Aitareya Āraṇyaka*
acc.	According to
BG	*Bhagavadgītā*
Bṛ. Up.	*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*
Ch. Up.	*Chāndogya Upaniṣad*
MSB	Madhva's *Sūtrabhāṣya*
Muṇḍ. Up.	*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*
RB	*Rāmānuja Bhāṣya* on *Vedāntasūtra*
SB	*Śaṁkara Bhāṣya* on *Vedāntasūtra*
Śv. Up.	*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*
Tait. Up.	*Taittirīya Upaniṣad*
VP	*Viṣṇupurāṇa*
VS	*Vedāntasūtra of Bādarāyaṇa*

Introduction

The *Vedāntasūtra* of Bādarāyaṇa, also known as *Brahmasūtra,*[1] constitutes the fundamental text of the Vedānta, which is the most important Indian philosophical system. The term 'Vedānta' means the concluding portion of the Vedas known as the Upaniṣads and as such it should normally refer to the philosophical teachings contained in the Upaniṣads. These teachings are systematized by Bādarāyaṇa in the form of aphorisms known as *Vedāntasūtra.* Hence in a broad sense Vedānta stands for the system of philosophy developed on the basis of both the Upaniṣads and the *Vedāntasūtra.* Besides these two source-books, *Bhagavadgītā* is also acknowledged as an important text of the Vedānta, the three constituting as *prasthāna-traya* or the triple foundation of the Vedānta system.

The *Vedāntasūtra* is ascribed to the sage Bādarāyaṇa as is evident from the fact that his name finds a mention in a few *sūtras* in the context of asserting his own view as against those of a few ancient *ācāryas* such as Ātreya, Āśmarathya, Bādari, Auḍulomi, Jaimini, Kāśakṛtsna, and Kārṣṇājini. According to tradition, he is identified with Vyāsa, the author of the *Mahābhārata* and considered as a divine incarnation. If we accept this fact, Bādarāyaṇa enjoys a great antiquity and would have lived long before Christian era.

The *sūtras* are concise aphoristic sentences and often expressed in a few cryptic words which are pregnant with philosophic ideas.[2] They codify the Upaniṣadic teachings in a systematic order. Their total number vary from 545 to 564, depending upon how the commentators read some of them either by splitting a single *sūtra* into two or combining two into one. The entire text comprising these *sūtras* are divided into four chapters known as *adhyāyas*. Each chapter is again divided into four parts known as *pādas*. Each part comprises number of topical sections, designated as *adhikaraṇas*, each of which consists of either a single or more *sūtras* dealing with a specific subject. The *adhikaraṇa* follows a methodology adopted in traditional philosophical disputation. It sets down a specific subject for discussion (*viṣaya*), raises alternative views on it (*saṁśaya*), states prima facie view (*pūrvapakṣa*), answers it after a methodical examination (*uttara*) and arrives at the final conclusion (*siddhānta*) on the subject.[1] The number of *adhikaraṇas* again varies from one commentator to another. It is 191 for Śaṁkara, 156 for Rāmānuja and 222 for Madhva. This wide variation arises as a result of the manner in which the *sūtras* are grouped together with reference to the subject-matter of the discussion. Despite the changes introduced by the commentators regarding the names and numbering of the *adhikaraṇas*, there is some unanimity among them on the general theme of *Vedāntasūtra* and the main subject-matter dealt in each *adhyāya*.

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[1] The other names used for *Vedāntasūtra* are the *Uttara Mīmāṁsāsūtras* as distinct from the *Pūrva Mīmāṁsāsūtras* of Jaimini and *Śārīraka Mīmāṁsāsūtras,* the word *Śārīraka* being understood as Brahman.

[2] According to the traditional definition, a *sūtra* should be composed of a few words, concise, indicative of its purport, comprehensive, meaningful and free from faults: *alpākṣaram asandigdhaṁ sāravat viśvatomukham; astobham anavadyam ca sūtraṁ sūtravido viduḥ* (quoted in *MSB*).

The central theme of *Brahmasūtra*, as the very title indicates, is the study of Brahman, the ultimate metaphysical reality. The very first aphorism commences with the statement that Brahman is to be enquired into. The entire first *adhyāya* is devoted to discuss the nature of Brahman. At the very beginning it offers a definition of Brahman as the sole cause of the origin, sustenance and dissolution of the universe. On the basis of this criterion, it examines methodically all the important passages of the major Upaniṣads which have a direct and indirect reference to Brahman to determine its nature and rule out from the purview of Reality other ontological entities, such as *pradhāna* (the primordial cosmic matter) of Sāṁkhya, *jīva* (the individual self), *ākāśa* (cosmic ether), *prāṇa* (vital breath), etc., which are claimed to be the cause of the universe. After a critical examination of all the relevant Upaniṣadic texts, it is conclusively established that Brahman is the primary cause of the universe. The first chapter of the *Brahmasūtra* is therefore titled as Samanvayādhyāya or the chapter devoted to establish the correlation of various texts of the Upaniṣads with Brahman as the ground of the cosmos.

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[1] *Adhikaraṇa* is defined as: *viṣayo saṁśayaścaiva, pūrvapakṣaḥ tathottaram; prayojanaṁ ca pañcaṅgam pañco adhikaraṇaṁ viduḥ*.

The second *adhyāya* of *Brahmasūtra,* known as Avirodhādhyāya or the chapter proving the absence of contradictions, is primarily devoted to uphold the main thesis of the first chapter, viz., that Brahman is the primary cause of the universe by way of refutation of the theories advanced by the rival schools of thought which stand opposed to the Vedānta theory of Reality. The schools which come up for critical examination in the order in which it is stated in the *Vedāntasūtra* are Sāṁkhya, Yoga, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Buddhism, Jainism, Pāśupata, and Pāñcarātra. This *adhyāya* also takes up for consideration whether or not the *jīva* and some of the evolutes of *Prakṛti* such as *viyat* (ether), *tejas* (fire), *vāyu* (air), *prāṇa* (vital breath), and *indriyas* (sense-organs) have an origin unlike Brahman. In this connection, the *sūtras* also deal with the nature of the *jīva* and its relation to Brahman and also the causal relationship between Brahman and the universe.

The third *adhyāya,* which is named as Sādhanādhyāya or the chapter dealing with the means of attainment, is devoted to discuss the ways and means of attaining Brahman. In this connection it covers the condition of the *jīva* in different states for the purpose of developing non-attachment (*vairāgya*), the cultivation of ethical virtues, the fulfilment of other requisite preliminaries for *upāsanā* or meditation and the nature of different types of *vidyās* (meditation) to be practised for the realization of Brahman.

The fourth *adhyāya* which is designated as Phalādhyāya or the chapter dealing with the fruit of spiritual discipline, considers the nature of the Supreme Goal of human endeavour (*puruṣārtha*) and covers the manner in which the prescribed *sādhana* is to be observed, the exit of the individual soul from the physical body at the time of liberation from bondage, the path through which liberated soul passes to reach the ultimate goal and the nature of *mokṣa* or final liberation from bondage.

Thus, the *Brahmasūtra* is a well-knit treatise on the Vedānta philosophy. It covers various topics related to the nature of Brahman (*tattva*), the ways and means of attaining it (*sādhana* or *hita)* and the nature of the goal (*puruṣārtha*). There is a perfect coherence between the different parts and the sections covered under each part. It presents a unified and coherent philosophical thought of high order. No wonder that it has attracted the attention of not only ancient thinkers but also modern scholars both Western and Indian. It is holding a dominant sway even in the present time.

What is the type of Vedānta philosophy that Bādarāyaṇa has presented in the *Brahmasūtra*? This is the main concern of the present book. Whenever we speak of Vedānta philosophy, it is generally identified with what Śaṁkara, Rāmānuja, Madhva and other commentators have expounded in their scholarly *Bhāṣya* on the *Vedāntasūtra*. Thus we refer to Śaṁkara's Advaita Vedānta or Rāmānuja's Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta or Madhva's Dvaita Vedānta, taking them to be the principal schools of Vedānta. There is adequate literature on the subject and a student of Vedānta is generally familiar with these schools. Do any of them represent the philosophy of Vedānta as presented by Bādarāyaṇa in his *sūtra*? Each school of Vedānta no doubt claims that it is faithful to Bādarāyaṇa's *Vedāntasūtra*. But Bādarāyaṇa himself would not have advocated different schools of Vedānta. We are, therefore, confronted with the task of finding out the type of Vedānta presented by Bādarāyaṇa in the *sūtras*.

Dr. Thibaut is the earliest European scholar who attempted to make a comparative study of the commentaries of Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja on the *Vedāntasūtra*. In his scholarly Introduction to the English translation of *Śaṁkara Bhāṣya*, he comes to the conclusion, after careful examination, that Śaṁkara's views on the major doctrines of Vedānta do not agree with the teaching of the *Vedāntasūtras*, while those of Rāmānuja have greater affinity with the system of Bādarāyaṇa. He also observes that the philosophy of Śaṁkara would on the whole stand nearer to the teachings of the Upaniṣads than the *sūtras* of Bādarāyaṇa. This view of Thibaut has been generally endorsed by many other modern scholars. But traditional scholars belonging to both schools of Vedānta do not accept such a view. The reason for questioning Thibaut's conclusion is obvious. The *Vedāntasūtra* codifies the teachings contained in the principal Upaniṣads. In the words of Śaṁkara, the *sūtras* string together the flowers in the form of Upaniṣadic statements. They are intended to discuss the teachings found in the Upaniṣads.[1] According to Rāmānuja, the words of Bādarāyaṇa constitute the nectar churned out of the milky ocean of the Upaniṣads.[2] They are regarded as *Nayasūtra* or aphorisms expressing the Upaniṣadic teachings in terms of logical reasoning[1] or syllogistic argument. Madhva regards the *Vedāntasūtra* as a *nirṇāyaka-śāstra* or a treatise presenting a well reasoned, definite conclusion, as compared to the Vedas and the Upaniṣads which are *nirṇeya-granthas* or works whose purport needs to be determined.[2] The *sūtra* cannot, therefore, be at variance with the Upaniṣads. If they are so, as some scholars have assumed, then Bādarāyaṇa would be deviating from the main trend of the Upaniṣads. Though such a view may be favoured by some Advaitins in order to uphold Śaṁkara's idealistic Monism it is not sustainable as will be seen from our critical evaluation of the philosophy of the *Vedāntasūtra* vis-à-vis that of the Upaniṣads.

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[1] *SB*, 1.1.2: *Vedānta-vākya-kusuma-grathanārthatvāt sūtrāṇām. Vedānta vākyāni hi sūtrair udāhṛtya vicāryante.*

[2] *RB*, opening verses: *Pārāśarya vacas-sudhām upaniṣad-dugdhābdhi-madhyodhṛtām*

A few other Indian scholars have made a comparative study of the different commentaries on the *Vedāntasūtra* and arrived at certain conclusions. Dr. Ghate in his book on the Vedānta—*A Study of Brahmasūtras with the Bhāṣyas of Śaṁkara, Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Madhva, and Vallabha*—observes after a brief analysis of the five comments on the *sūtra*, that Śaṁkara's doctrine is "out of count so far as the *sūtras* are concerned" and that Madhva's commentary is "far from being right interpretation of the *sūtras*." In a similar exposition of *Brahmasūtras* and their principal commentaries, Dr. B.N.K. Sharma, by his critical observation on the comments of both Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, takes the view that Madhva's interpretation of the *sūtras* is sounder than that of others. In another study made by S.S. Raghavachar in his book titled *Śrī Bhāṣya on the Philosophy of the Brahmasūtra*, it is pointed out that the doctrines of Śaṁkara's Advaita Vedānta are not at all reflected in the *Vedāntasūtra* and that Śaṁkara's commentary is not so close to the original as it could be, whereas Rāmānuja's interpretation is more faithful to the *sūtras* and also to the Upaniṣads. All these conclusions appear to a scholar who does not owe an allegiance to any particular school of Vedānta as biased with the teachings of the particular commentator. An objective study of the *Vedāntasūtra* without imposing the views of the commentators needs to be made by a critical evaluation of the commentaries on the *sūtras* in order to arrive at a proper conclusion regarding the nature of the philosophy enunciated by Bādarāyaṇa in his classic *Brahmasūtra*.

The following are the major doctrines of Vedānta:

1. The nature of Brahman;

[1] Cf. *BG*, XIII.4: *Bramha-sūtra-padaiścaiva hetumadbhiḥ viniścitaiḥ*.

[2] *MSB*, 1.1.1: See also B.N.K. Sharma, *Bramhasūtras*, vol. I, p. 9.

2. The nature of the Individual Self (*jīva*) and its relation to Brahman;
3. The nature of the universe (*jagat*) and its relation to Brahman;
4. The nature of the means of attaining Brahman (*sādhana*); and
5. The nature of the Supreme Goal (*parama puruṣārtha*).

Though all the commentators have acknowledged that these five doctrines constitute the important subjects of the *Brahmasūtra,* they differ widely with regard to their details on account of the different metaphysical doctrines maintained by them. This has given room for controversial issues on each doctrine. On the nature of Brahman, the question is raised whether it is an absolutely undifferentiated Being (*nirviśeṣa*) or whether it is a concrete Being qualified with attributes (*saviśeṣa*). Regarding the nature of *jīva,* the controversy is centred on the question whether it is identical with Brahman or whether it is a distinct reality having some relation to Brahman. As regards the nature of the universe, the controversy is focused on the issue whether it is an illusory manifestation of Brahman due to *avidyā* or whether it is real having causal relation to Brahman. On the subject of the *sādhana,* the issue involved is whether the intuitive knowledge of Brahman (*aparokṣa jñāna*) is the direct means to *mokṣa* or whether the unceasing meditation on Brahman (*upāsanā*) directly leads to *mokṣa.* Regarding the nature of the Supreme Goal, the question is raised whether the soul after it is liberated from bondage becomes one with Brahman or whether it enjoys the bliss of Brahman without losing its individuality. There are other allied issues which the commentators raise in the course of their interpretation of the *sūtra* and also the connected Upaniṣadic texts. Each exponent claims that whatever explanation he offers has the support by the *Vedāntasūtra* and the Upaniṣads. Against such conflicting views by the commentators, it becomes difficult to determine the correct view of Bādarāyaṇa on the major doctrines.

The difficulty of delineating the views of Bādarāyaṇa on these doctrines is further aggravated by the very nature of the *sūtra.* These are expressed in a few cryptic words and they do not convey clear-cut ideas of its author. Many of them are couched in terms which allow more than one interpretation. The traditional commentators with deep spiritual insight have no doubt attempted to bring out the fuller implications of the aphorisms. But unfortunately there is no unanimity among them with regard to the major philosophical theories. Thus, we have different schools of Vedānta, although the basic text is one. The Upaniṣads which serve the basis for the *sūtras* also suffer from a similar drawback. The crucial Upaniṣadic texts have been interpreted differently by the commentators leading to divergent views on the philosophy of the Upaniṣads. Even modern scholars, both European and Indian, who have made independent study of the prinicipal Upaniṣads have reached different conclusions regarding the type of Vedānta enunciated in the Upaniṣads. The scholars are therefore of the opinion that it is not possible to arrive at an undisputed conclusion regarding the philosophy of Bādarāyaṇa's *Brahmasūtra.*

Though this observation is partly true, it is not impossible to delineate the views of Bādarāyaṇa on the major philosophical doctrines of Vedānta on the basis of the *sūtras.* There are sufficient number of *sūtras* which are unambiguous and which throw light on Bādarāyaṇa's views regarding the important Vedānta doctrines. The relevant *sūtras* bearing on these doctrines are generally formulated on the basis of the Upaniṣadic passages which are known as *viṣaya-vākya* or the statement serving as the subject-matter of the *sūtra.* These Upaniṣadic texts provide a clue to understand the import of the *sūtras.* Thus for instance, the second *sūtra, janmādyasya yataḥ,* which simply means that from which proceeds the origin, etc., is based on the *Taittirīya Upaniṣadic* text which defines Brahman as that from which the universe originates, that by which when born it lives, and that into which, when departing, they enter. In the context of the Upaniṣadic teaching, there is no ambiguity regarding the import of the aphorism. Whether the description of Brahman as the primary cause of the universe applies to Brahman as qualified by attributes (*saviśeṣa*) or to higher Brahman which is undifferentiated (*nirviśeṣa*) is a matter of dispute arising out of certain metaphysical position taken by the concerned commentator. There is however no room to question the fact that Bādarāyaṇa is offering a clear definition of Brahman, which is the subject of enquiry as stated in the first *sūtra.* Similarly, in another aphorism referring to the nature of Brahman, the author of the *sūtra* states clearly that it is *ānandamaya* or blissful in character, as explained in the Ānandavallī of *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* to which this *sūtra* has a reference (*ānandamayo abhyāsāt*).[1] Whether *ānanda* as an attribute is applicable to higher

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[1] *VS,* 1.1.12 acc. *SB* and *MSB;* 1.1.13 acc. *RB.*

nirviśeṣa Brahman is a question of interpretation in accordance with the predilection of the commentator. Regarding the nature of the Individual Self, the aphorism states explicitly that *jīva* is *kartā* or the agent of action. Whether the *kartṛtva* is an essential character of *jīva* or its adventitious property is a matter of interpretation of the commentators. But the author of the *sūtra* intends to convey the view that *jīva* is the agent of action as otherwise the sacred texts would become meaningless (*kartā śāstrārthvattvāt*).[1] Referring to the *sādhana*, the aphorism says in clear terms that it is of the view of Bādarāyaṇa that the Supreme Goal is attained only through *vidyā* (implied in the *sūtra*) because it is so declared in the Revealed Scripture (*puruṣārthaḥ ataḥ śabdāt iti Bādarāyaṇaḥ*).[2] The term *vidyā* may be open to different interpretation, but it is certain that Bādarāyaṇa emphasizes the need of the pursuit of a spiritual discipline as laid down in the Upaniṣads for attaining the highest goal. On the subject of the nature of the Supreme Goal, the *sūtra* points out that the soul after it attains Brahman reveals itself in its true form because it is stated so in the scripture (*sampadyāvirbhāvaḥ svena śabdāt*).[3] In the context of the relevant passage of the *Chandogya Upaniṣad* to which this *sūtra* as well as the concluding one refer (*anāvṛttiḥ śabdāt*), it is clear in the mind of Bādarāyaṇa that the soul after it is liberated from bondage attains a higher status from which there is no return to the mundane existence. The issue whether it becomes one with Brahman or whether it retains its individuality enjoying equal status with Brahman arises as a result of the interpretation of the commentators in accordance with their metaphysical doctrines.

The *sūtras* mentioned above, one on each major doctrine of Vedānta, substantiate our contention that the selected *sūtras* which are relevant for the purpose of determining Bādarāyaṇa's views on the Vedānta doctrines are not so vague as not to allow a comprehension of their true import, as some scholars believe. There are many other aphorisms of this nature which provide sufficient data to find out the philosophy advanced by Bādarāyaṇa without imposing the views of the commentators. The commentaries would no doubt be of great help in identifying the appropriate *viṣaya-vākya* or the specific Upaniṣadic statement on the basis of which the *sūtra* is generally framed and also to know the context and the subject-matter of the *sūtra*. We can, therefore, safely rely on the aphorisms for outlining the philosophy of the *Brahmasūtra* as taught by Bādarāyaṇa.

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[1] *VS*, II.3.33.

[2] *VS*, III.4.1.

[3] *VS*. IV.4.1.

It is not necessary for this purpose to examine each and every *sūtra*. The aphorisms are far too many and cover a wide range of philosophical and non-philosophical topics. The task has been made easier by the commentators by grouping them under the *adhikaraṇas* or sectional topics dealing with specific subjects. It may also be not necessary to study all the *adhikaraṇas* as some of them are not philosophically significant. We can confine our study to such of the important *adhikaraṇas* as have direct bearing on five main doctrines mentioned earlier. It is not intended for this purpose to undertake a critical and comparative study of the different schools of Vedānta and assess their relative merits. The criticisms and counter criticisms of different schools of Vedānta have been accomplished adequately by the exponents of the concerned system of Vedānta in order to defend their own system as truly representing Bādarāyaṇa's *Brahmasūtra*. The classical polemical works such as the *Śatadūṣaṇī* of Vedānta Deśika, the *Nyāyāmṛta* of Vyāsatīrtha and the *Advaitasiddhi* of Madhusudana Sarasvati are primarily directed towards this end. The scope of our study would be confined to present objectively the views of Bādarāyaṇa on Vedānta as enshrined in the *Vedāntasūtra*. For this purpose we shall focus our attention, as stated earlier, to the examination of the selected *adhikaraṇas* which have a direct bearing on the five fundamental doctrines of Vedānta and present the views of the principal commentators on the concerned topics and the *sūtras* along with the connected Upaniṣadic texts.

There are several commentaries on the *Vedāntasūtra*. The notable ancient Bhāṣyas which are extant are those of Śaṁkara (AD 788), Bhāskara (AD 1000), Rāmānuja (AD 1017), and Madhva (AD 1238). As the *Bhāskara Bhāṣya* is not in vogue, we shall leave it out of our study. The other commentaries contributed by Nimbārka, Śrīkaṇṭha, Śrīpathi, Vallabha, Vijñāna Bhikṣu, and Baladeva, though important, are of later origin; besides, they are also adaptations of the earlier commentaries with some modifications to fit into their theological doctrines. Hence, these too have been left out of our scope of study. We shall, therefore, confine our attention to the Bhāṣyas of Śaṁkara, Rāmānuja and Madhva on the *Vedāntasūtra*, as each one of them represents a distinctive viewpoint of Vedāntic thought.

In examining the comments of these *ācāryas* on the selected *adhikaraṇas*, we shall leave out the exegetical and other doctrinal details in support of their own theories, as stated in their learned Bhāṣyas and more extensively in the detailed commentaries thereon such as *Bhāmatī* of Vācaspati Miśra, *Vivaraṇa* of Prakāśātman, *Śrutaprakāśikā* of Sudarśana Sūri and *Tattvaprakāśikā* of Jayatīrtha. We shall concentrate on presenting the essential points that bring out the main purport of the *sūtras* to find out which particular comment is faithful to the text of the *sūtra* and the connected Upaniṣadic text. In this exercise, we shall adopt the following criteria:

1. Conformity of the theory to the Upaniṣadic text;
2. Logical and philosophical soundness of the theory; and
3. The theory being unbiased by sectarian dogmas.

As Vedānta is an exposition of the teachings of the Upaniṣads and scripture is regarded by Bādarāyaṇa as the sole authority in respect of spiritual matters, the first criterion gains greater importance for an orthodox Vedāntin. For students of modern philosophy, logical soundness of a theory is more important than mere appeal to scripture and hence the second criterion is given equal weightage. The third criterion is also important because any philosophical theory which is established on the basis of the sectarian dogma is bound to be vitiated by prejudice and hence it is also taken into consideration in our general evaluation.

Our findings emerging from such an evaluation would no doubt reveal to us the correct picture of the philosophy of Bādarāyaṇa's *Brahmasūtra*. It may then become easier to assess which school of Vedānta represents faithfully the teachings of *Vedāntasūtra*. It is hoped that this study, which is the first of its kind ever undertaken, would help to understand the Vedānta philosophy as outlined by Bādarāyaṇa on the basis of the Upaniṣads.

Chapter 1

The Doctrine of Brahman

The doctrine of Brahman, the ultimate metaphysical Reality, constitutes the principal subject of the *Vedāntasūtra.* The very opening aphorism emphasizes that Brahman is to be enquired into after fulfilling certain preliminary requirements (*athāto brahma jijñāsā*). Most of the *adhikaraṇas* of the first *adhyāya* discuss the nature of Brahman. The second *adhyāya* covers Brahman in relation to the individul self (*jīvātman*), the universe (*jagat*) and the evolutes of the primordial cosmic matter. The third and fourth *adhyāyas* also deal with Brahman indirectly with reference to the means of its attainment (*sādhana*) and the Supreme Goal (*puruṣārtha*). It is therefore important to discuss the concerned selected *adhikaraṇas* in order to understand the true nature of Brahman as conceived by Bādarāyaṇa in the *Vedāntasūtra.*

MEANING OF THE TERM BRAHMAN

Before we take up the detailed discussion of the nature of Brahman, we should understand the exact connotation and denotation of the term Brahman. This is the term which is generally used in the Upaniṣads to denote the Ultimate Reality. Bādarāyaṇa adopts the same term and mentions it only in the opening *sūtra* as the subject of the philosophic investigation (*jijñāsā*). He also offers a definition of it in the second aphorism on the basis of the passage of the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad.* While commenting on the first aphorism, some of the commentators discuss the connotation and denotation of the term. Śaṁkara refers to the definition offered by Bādarāyaṇa in the second aphorism, viz., "That from which the origin etc. of this universe proceed."[1] If this meaning is accepted, then it would follow that the term Brahman denotes an ontological entity which is the primary cause of the universe (*jagat-kāraṇa*). Such a Being, as

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[1] *SB,* I.1.2: *Yataḥ sarvajñāt sarvaśakteḥ kāraṇāt bhavati tat brahmeti.*

Śaṁkara himself states, would be qualified by omniscience (*sarvajñatva*) and omnipotence (*sarvaśaktitva*), the two essential characteristics needed for the creation of the universe. Obviously, such a concept of Brahman as the cause of the universe, corresponds to the commonly accepted God of the Religion (*Īśvara*), and not to a higher Brahman (*para-brahma*), an absolutely undifferentiated Being (*nirviśeṣa*).

Rāmānuja advances a straightforward explanation of the term Brahman on the basis of its etymological meaning as enunciated in the Śruti and Smṛti texts. The term 'Brahman' is derived from the root verb *bṛh* which implies 'to grow' (*bṛhati*) and 'causes to grow' (*bṛhmayati*). Thus states the *Atharvaśiras Upaniṣad*:[1] "That is called Brahman because it grows and causes to grow." The *Viṣṇupurāṇa* reiterates the same explanation.

Yāska, the author of Vedic concordance, also offers the meaning of Brahman as that which is infinitely great (*brahma paribṛḍam*). Considering the two ephithets—'to grow' and 'causing to grow', which convey the connotation of this term, Brahman denotes an ontological entity which is infinitely great both in respect of its nature (*svarūpa*) and attributes (*guṇa*). Keeping in mind all these explanations of the term supported by authoritative Śruti and Smṛti texts, Rāmānuja defines the term Brahman as the Supreme Person (*Puruṣottama*), who is free from all imperfections and endowed with infinite auspicious attributes par excellence (*brahma śabdena svabhāvato nirasta nikhila doṣaḥ anavadhikātiśaya asaṅkhyeya kalyāṇa-guṇa-gaṇaḥ puruṣottamo abhidhīyate*). To avoid any confusion, he designates that Supreme Person as *sarveśvara*, a term used in the Upaniṣads to denote the Supreme God. This would mean that Brahman is the very personal God of Religion, who is designated by the Upaniṣads as Nārāyaṇa, a term which has all the implications of the Ultimate Reality (*para-tattva*).

Madhva does not enter into the discussion of the etymological meaning of the term in his *Bhāṣya* on the opening *sūtra*. He takes the term Brahman to denote a Being possessing infinite qualities (*sarva guṇa pūrṇa*) and equates it with Viṣṇu, the supreme Vedic deity.[2] Through out his *sūtra-bhāṣya*, he maintains consistently a sectarian theory of Brahman as Viṣṇu.

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[1] See *Atharvaśiras Up.* (quoted in *Śrutaprakāśikā* on *RB*, I.1.1, p. 18), *bṛhati, bṛhmayati tasmād-ucyate para brahma.*

[2] *MSB*, I.1.1: *Bramha śabdaśca viṣṇaveva*; see also I.1.6 and I.2.1; see also Vyāsatīrtha's

What does Bādarāyaṇa mean by the term Brahman? No where in *Brahmasūtra,* he mentions the name of any deity, although the commentators equate Brahman with either Nārāyaṇa or Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa or even Śiva (according to Śrīkaṇṭha). He adopts a philosophical approach to the theory of Ultimate Reality and defines it in general terms as that which is the primary cause of the universe. It may become a necessity to identify Brahman with a name of particular deity for the purpose of meditation. It is therefore justifiable to identify Brahman with the specific deity in so far as that deity is acknowledged by the Upaniṣads as *para-tattva* and that it also fulfils the criteria of *jagat-kāraṇatva* laid down in the Upaniṣads. In view of this both Rāmānuja and Madhva and other theistic interpreters of the *Vedāntasūtra* equate Brahman with a deity. Śaṁkara also admits that the *Saguṇa* Brahman is Nārāyaṇa.[1]

The important point for consideration is whether the term Brahman denotes an undifferentiated Reality, the higher Brahman as postulated by Śaṁkara. If we go by the etymological meaning of the term, the two important characteristics connoted by it, viz., *bṛhatva* and *bṛhmaṇatva,* along with the definition offered in the second *sūtra,* the term does not directly denote the undifferentiated Reality. Śaṁkara himself admits this fact when he states that Brahman as the primary cause of the universe is *Īśvara* endowed with *sarvajñatva* (omniscience) and *sarvaśaktitva* (omnipotence). But this does not rule out the possibility of his admission of a higher Brahman, which though not the object of knowledge, can be realized by direct intuition. Whether such a Brahman exists at all is a question raised by the critics of Advaita and we shall discuss this issue separately. The point to be noted here is that according to Bādarāyaṇa, the term Brahman denotes a Reality which as the primary cause of the *jagat* is the Supreme Being qualified with attributes. In other words, it is *saviśeṣa* Brahman and not *nirviśeṣa* Brahman. The several *adhikaraṇas* of the *Vedāntasūtra* relating to the nature of Brahman would reveal this view of Bādarāyaṇa.

Tātparyacandrikā, brahmaśabdaśca 'atha kasmāt ucyate brahmeti, bṛhanto hy-asmin guṇāḥ' ityādi Śruti balāt guṇa pūrtyarthaḥ. For Madhva the term Viṣṇu or Brahman is synonymous with Nārāyaṇa, Vāsudeva and Hari.

[1] See *SB* on Antaryāmī Brāhmaṇa of *Br. Up.*

DEFINITION OF THE TERM BRAHMAN

Coming now to the definition of the term Brahman, Bādarāyaṇa states in one cryptic *sūtra*, which reads: *janmādy-asya-yataḥ.*[1] It means that from which (*yataḥ*), the origin etc. (*janmādi*) of the universe (*asya*) proceed. This *sūtra* is formulated with reference to the passage of the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* which defines Brahman. Bhṛgu requests his father Varuṇa to teach him about Brahman. Varuṇa replies: "That from which these beings are born, that by which when born they live, and that unto which when departing, they enter; seek to know that; that is Brahman." In the context of the Upaniṣadic teaching, there is no vagueness regarding the fuller implication of the *sūtra*. The word *janmādi* in it, therefore, refers to the three cosmic functions, viz., creation (*janma* or *sṛṣṭi*), sustenance (*sthiti*) and dissolution (*bhaṅga* or *pralaya*). There is no disagreement between Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja with regard to the general import of the *sūtra*. Madhva, however, interprets *ādi* to include five additional functions of Viṣṇu. These are: *niyamana* (to control everything), *jñāna* (to confer enlightenment), *ajñāna* (to obscure knowledge of the souls), *bandha* (to cause bondage), and *mokṣa* (to grant liberation).[2] Though prima facie there should be no objection to attribute any number of additional functions to Brahman taken as the Supreme God (Viṣṇu), the three cosmic functions mentioned by the Upaniṣad constitute the fundamental ones, since these taken together serve as the important criteria to determine whether a specific ontological entity deserves to be accepted as the Ultimate Reality. This is borne out by the fact that in some of the later *adhikaraṇas* discussing the doubtful Upaniṣadic texts which speak of *ākāśa* and *prāṇa* as Ultimate Reality, Bādarāyaṇa adopts the threefold cosmic process as the sole criterion for acknowledging such an ontological entity as Brahman. In the concluding section of the *Vedāntasūtra*, *jagad-vyāpāra* or the cosmic function is adopted as a unique attribute of Brahman in order to differentiate the liberated soul (*muktātmā*) from it. It is, therefore, obvious that in the opinion of Bādarāyaṇa, *jagat-kāraṇatva* serves as a distinguishing qualification of Brahman.

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[1] *VS*, I.1.2.

[2] *MSB*, I.2.1: *Sṛṣṭi-sthiti-saṁhāra-niyamana-jñāna-ajñāna-bandha-mokṣaḥ yataḥ.* Madhva quotes in support of it a verse drawn from *Skandapurāṇa*: *utpatti-sthitisaṁhāra niyatir-jñānam āvṛtiḥ; bandha mokṣau ca puruṣād-yasmāt sa harir ekarāt.*

In this connection the commentators on the *Śaṁkara Bhāṣya* raise the issue whether the threefold cosmic function serves as a qualification per proprium (*viśeṣaṇa*) or as a qualification per accidens (*upalakṣaṇa*) of Brahman. An object can be defined either in terms of its essential attributes or it can be described with reference to certain identity marks. The moon in the distant sky, for instance, can be identified with reference to its abundant luminosity. It can also be identified through the moon seen between the branches of a tree. The former type of definition is known as *svarūpa-lakṣaṇa* or definition through the essential qualifications belonging to the object and the latter is named *taṭastha-lakṣaṇa* or description offered by using certain identity marks which actually do not belong to the object. According to the Advaitins, the definition offered by the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* and the Sūtrakāra is of the latter type. The reason for advancing this view is that the higher Brahman according to Śaṁkara is undifferentiated and as such *jagatkāraṇatva* cannot be attributed to it as a qualification per proprium. The threefold cosmic process referred to in the Upaniṣad serves only as a qualification per accidens for the purpose of knowing Brahman, like the moon seen through the branches. It is therefore, the lower Brahman or the Brahman associated with *māyā* which is the source of the origin, sustenance and dissolution of the universe and not the higher Brahman. The critics of Advaita, who do not subscribe to the theory of two Brahmans reject this explanation. Madhva and his followers have advanced elaborate criticism against the Advaitin's view. Rāmānuja, while replying to the prima facie viewpoints out that *jagatkāraṇatva,* either taken as *upalakṣaṇa* or *viśeṣaṇa,* can serve the purpose of knowing Brahman directly. There is no need to postulate two Brahmans for this purpose. Śaṁkara in his commentary on this *sūtra* does not discuss this issue. As far as Sūtrakāra is concerned it is obvious that he offers a clear-cut definition of Brahman on the basis of the *Taittirīya Upaniṣadic* text. Logically an object is defined in terms of its essential characteristics it possesses. We distinguish one object from another only with reference to its essential characteristic. Brahman is defined as the origin of threefold cosmic process to distinguish it from all other sentient and non-sentient entities. It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that Bādarāyaṇa in this *sūtra* intends to offer a definition of Brahman in terms of *jagatkāraṇatva* which is the distinguishing qualification. If this is the true import of this *sūtra,* there is no scope to postulate a *nirviśeṣa* Brahman since such an undifferentiated being cannot have any causal relation to the universe. Rāmānuja openly states that the present *sūtra* defining Brahman as the cause of the universe does not fit in with the theory of *nirviśeṣa* Brahman.[1]

The Upaniṣad offers another definition of Brahman. It defines it as *satyam, jñānam, anantam.* That is, Brahman is Reality, Knowledge and Infinite. Bādarāyaṇa does not mention this definition, though the import of each of these terms is implicit in other *sūtras.* However, the commentators have acknowledged both the definitions and explained their relative importance in accordance with their metaphysical doctrines. For Śaṁkara and his followers, the definition of Brahman as *satya* etc., is of greater importance as it conveys the non-relational impartite unitary character of Brahman (*akhaṇḍārtha*). It is taken as *svarūpa-lakṣaṇa,* as compared to the definition offered by the Sūtrakāra, which is regarded as *taṭastha-lakṣaṇa.* Such an explanation suits the Advaitin to uphold the theory of two Brahmans, the undifferentiated higher Brahman (*Nirguṇa*) and the Brahman as qualified with attributes (*Saguṇa*). Rāmānuja and his followers regard both the definitions as pointing to one and the same Brahman, which is endowed with infinite attributes. The only difference between the two definitions is, as explained by the author of the *Śrutaprakāśikā,* that the description of Brahman as *satya* etc. is intended to bring out the mere *svarūpa* or the essential character of Brahman, whereas Brahman as *jagatkāraṇa* refers to Brahman as organically related to this universe of *cit* and *acit.* Madhva, who rejects straightaway the theory of two Brahmans regards both the definitions as *svarūpa lakṣaṇa,* since they serve the purpose of distinguishing Brahman from all other entities. We need not enter into the discussion of the relative merits of these explanations as it is beyond the scope of this book. It would suffice to note that Bādarāyaṇa has confined his attention in the second *sūtra* to provide a clear definition of Brahman as the cause of creation, sustenance and dissolution of the universe.

PROOF FOR THE EXISTENCE OF BRAHMAN

What is the proof for the existence of Brahman as the ground of the cosmic process? This question is squarely answered by Bādarāyaṇa at the very outset in the third *sūtra.* It reads: *śāstra yonitvāt.* The meaning of this aphorism is that *śāstra* is the source for the knowledge of Brahman. The word *śāstra* taken in the broad sense means the Vedas including the Upaniṣads and all the allied sacred texts such as the Vedāṅgas, Itihāsas and Purāṇas. The term *yoni* means 'source'. Śaṁkara interprets this term in two ways. The first explanation is that Brahman is the source of the Vedas and other sacred texts on the basis of the Upaniṣadic text which says that the *Ṛgveda* emanates from Brahman as its breath.[1] This interpretation is claimed to support the omniscience (*sarvajñatva*) of Brahman, which is only implied in the earlier *sūtra*. The second explanation, which is also accepted by Rāmānuja and Madhva, is that *śāstra* is the source or *kāraṇa* (*pramāṇa*) for the knowledge of Brahman. The fuller implication of this *sūtra*, as explained by the commentators, is that Brahman cannot be known either by means of perception or inference. In this connection Rāmānuja examines the inferential arguments advanced by the Naiyāyikas to prove the existence of God and demonstrates that it is not possible to prove conclusively on the basis of logic, the existence of God or Brahman as conceived in the Upaniṣads. *Śāstra* is, therefore, the only source or *pramāṇa* for knowing Brahman (*śāstraika pramāṇakaḥ*).

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[1] See *RB,* I.1.2.

The fact that *śāstra* is the only authoritative source for the knowledge of Brahman is further reaffirmed in the fourth *sūtra* which forms the subject of a separate *adhikaraṇa* known as Samanvayādhikaraṇa. The *sūtra* reads: *tat-tu samanvayāt.* Its general meaning is that Brahman is known through *śāstra* because all the Upaniṣadic texts proclaim it as their purport. Every word in the *sūtra* is of special significance. The word *tat* means Brahman; to be more specific, it refers to the thesis maintained in the earlier *sūtra*, viz., that *śāstra* is the only source (*pramāṇa*) for knowing Brahman. According to both Rāmānuja and Śaṁkara, the word *tu* which is a conjunction means 'but'. It implies that the view upheld by Bādarāyaṇa differs from that of the Pūrvamīmāṁsakas who do not consider the Upaniṣadic texts as purportful. According to them only scriptural texts which are in the form of injunctions and which involve human endeavour such as the performance of a *yāga* leading to the attainment of a desired goal are meaningful. The Upaniṣads, on the contrary, teach about Brahman which is an existent and accomplished fact (*siddha vastu*) and not something to be achieved by human effort and they are not therefore purportful. The arguments advanced by the Pūrvamīmāṁsakas are subjected to a detailed critical examination both by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja and refuted. It is demonstrated that the Upaniṣadic texts, though they refer to Brahman, are purportful.

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[1] *Br. Up.*, II.4.10: *Asya mahato bhūtasya niśvasitam etat Ṛgvedaḥ.*

By way of explaining the fuller implication of *samanvaya,* Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja advance different views. In this connection they discuss the theories of bondage, the means of overcoming it and the nature of the goal to be attained. According to Śaṁkara, though Brahman is not a goal to be accomplished by human effort enjoined by scriptural injunction including *upāsanā,* the Vedānta texts serve a useful purpose by providing spiritual knowledge which dispells ignorance about Brahman standing as an obstacle to its realization and thereby serve the cause of attaining the goal. According to Rāmānuja, the mere knowledge derived from the study of the Upaniṣads does not remove the bondage in the form of *avidyā* standing as an obstacle for the attainment of Brahman. On the other hand, it is the knowledge leading to the *upāsanā* or meditation on Brahman as enjoined by the scriptural texts that helps to overcome the bondage and thereby attain Brahman, which is the *puruṣārtha* or Supreme Goal. In so far as the Upaniṣadic texts teach about Brahman as the Supreme Goal of attainment, the Vedānta texts are purportful even though Brahman is an existent (*siddhavastu*).

Madhva offers an altogether different explanation on this *sūtra.* He does not refer to the theory of Pūrvamīmāṁsā, as the prima facie view, as implied in the word *tu.* Taking a sectarian stand he points out that all Vedānta texts declare that Brahman is Viṣṇu and not Rudra or any other deity. This, he contends, is to be decided by adopting the canons of interpretation laid down in the Mīmāṁsāśāstra including the sixfold criteria to determine the purport of the Upaniṣadic texts such as *upakrama* (commencement of the passage), *upasaṁhāra* (its conclusion), *abhyāsa* (repetition of the teaching), *apūrvatā* (novelty of the teaching), *phala* (fruitfulness), *arthavāda* (eulogistic references), and *upapatti* (logical justification). This is the implication of the term *samanvaya* (*samyak anvaya*). Such a *samanvaya* is not to be restricted, according to Madhva, only to the selected texts of the major Upaniṣads teaching about Brahman, as Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja have done but on the contrary it should cover the entire range of extant *śāstra,* known, unknown and to be known comprising all scriptural texts including those of *karma-kāṇḍa* of the Vedas, the passages of Itihāsas and Purāṇas. The exegesis of *śāstra* is to be based on the highest and fullest denotative power of the words (*parama-mukhyārtha*) along with the application of the *tātparya-liṅga*. This is the true significance of *samanvaya*. With the adoption of such a modus operandi, Brahman as the supreme source of eightfold dispensation of the universe becomes fully known by *śāstra*.[1]

Whatever may be the merit of the view held by Madhva, it cannot be said with certainty that Bādarāyaṇa intended such a wide range *samanvaya* with Brahman of not only the principal Upaniṣadic texts but also the Ṛgvedic passages, other Vedas, Itihāsas, Purāṇas and all the sacred literature. If we closely examine the *adhikaraṇas* of the first *adhyāya* which is mainly devoted to discuss the nature of Brahman, we find that he closely follows the teachings contained in the major Upaniṣads such as *Chāndogya, Bṛhadāraṇyaka, Taittirīya, Muṇḍaka, Kaṭha, Aitareya,* and *Kauṣītakī*, even though the Vedas and allied sacred texts covered under the general term *śāstra* are regarded by him as *pramāṇa* for knowing Brahman. This fact is evident from the *viṣaya-vākyas* drawn from them and also by the adoption of the same terms in the *sūtras* as found in these Upaniṣadic texts. He does not however, rule out Smṛti texts and some *sūtras* do refer to them for support of what is stated in the Śruti.[2] Even in his reference to Smṛti texts it appears that he has in mind generally *Bhagavadgītā* and *Viṣṇupurāṇa* and not Purāṇas such as *Skanda* as frequently quoted by Madhva in his *Sūtrabhāṣya*. The reason for the selection of the major Upaniṣads and Smṛti texts by Bādarāyaṇa is due to the fact that these contain passages which deal directly with the philosophical doctrines. The *samanvaya* referred to by Bādarāyaṇa in the *sūtra* and attempted in the first *adhyāya* known as Samanvayādhyāya is presumably in respect of the text of the major Upaniṣads, which in a technical sense constitute Vedānta.[3]

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[1] *MSB*, I.1.4: *Upakramādi tātparya liṅgaiḥ samyak nirūpyamāṇe tadeva śāstra-gamyam.*

[2] See *VS*, I.2.6: *smṛteśca;* I.3.22: *apica smaryate;* IV.1.10: *smaranti ca.*

[3] According to the traditional explanation, the word 'Upaniṣad' means 'that which reveals the nature of Brahman in a direct way, unlike the *karma-kāṇḍa* of the Vedas.' *Brahmaṇi upaniṣaṇṇeti upaniṣat, upaniṣaṇṇatvāt vā upaniṣat.*

Chapter 2

The Nature of Brahman

After defining Brahman as the cause of the universe, Bādarāyaṇa proceeds to discuss the nature of the Ultimate Reality. Most of the *adhikaraṇas* in the first *adhyāya* of *Vedāntasūtra* are devoted to bring out some of the important characteristics of Brahman. The Upaniṣads offer varying descriptions of Brahman. While some of the statements about Brahman are clear (*spaṣṭa*), many others are vague (*aspaṣṭa*). Some of the passages which refer to other ontological entities such as *pradhāna* (the primordial cosmic matter), *jīvātman* (the individual self), *ākāśa* (the cosmic ether), *prāṇa* (the vital breath), *jyotis* (the light), etc. give the impression that they are the Ultimate Reality. Bādarāyaṇa has, therefore, undertaken the task to clear the doubts and determine precisely the nature of Brahman.

The first important characteristic of Brahman which is prominently brought out at the very outset of *Vedāntasūtra* is that Brahman as the Ultimate Reality is distinct from both the non-sentient entity such as *pradhāna* (the primordial cosmic matter) and the sentient *jīvātman* (individual soul). The fifth *adhikaraṇa* known as Īkṣatyadhikaraṇa and the sixth one named Ānandamayādhikaraṇa are devoted to establish this fact. This is the view expressed explicitly by Rāmānuja in his introductory remarks to the Ānandamayādhikaraṇa and also in the preface to the second *pāda* of first *adhyāya*. Śaṁkara also admits it indirectly when he states that these *adhikaraṇas* affirm Brahman as a sentient Being. The establishment of Brahman as the sole cause of the universe rules out the non-sentient *pradhāna* and also the *jīvātman*. The explanation of Madhva which differs from both Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja is stated separately later. We shall first discuss these two topics.

BRAHMAN AS SENTIENT BEING

The Īkṣatyadhikaraṇa covers the single *sūtra* which reads: *īkṣateḥ na* *aśabdam.*[1] The word *aśabdam* is interpreted by Śaṁkara as not supported by Śruti. For Rāmānuja, it means that which is not proved by scripture, but established by inference (*ānumānika*). In either case, the general meaning of the *sūtra,* as interpreted by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, is that *pradhāna* or the primordial cosmic matter accepted by Sāṁkhyas cannot be the cause of the universe because the function of seeing or resolving (*īkṣaṇa*) is ascribed to the causal substance. The negative particle *na* in the *sūtra* implies the denial of the prima facie view, which refers in the present context to the Sāṁkhya theory of *pradhāna* as the cause of the universe. The justification for bringing up the Sāṁkhya theory for criticism can be found in the context of the passage of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* speaking of the creation of the universe in which the term *sat* is employed. The passage states: "This (the universe) existed as *sat* only in the beginning, one only, without a second; that (*sat*) resolved 'may I become many;' then it created *tejas* etc."[2] According to the prima facie view, this passage can be interpreted in favour of *pradhāna* of Sāṁkhya, the term *sat* being taken as the unmanifested form of *jagat.* Since such an interpretation stands counter to the Vedānta theory of Brahman as the sole cause of the universe, it becomes necessary for Bādarāyaṇa to reject it on the ground that the function of resolving or seeing (*īkṣaṇa*) ascribed to *sat* cannot hold good in respect of non-sentient *pradhāna.* That it is not possible to ascribe intelligence to non-sentient *pradhāna* in any manner is further confirmed by advancing additional arguments by Bādarāyaṇa in the subsequent *sūtras*[3] in support of this thesis. The main points are:

(a) *Sat* is identified with *Ātman* and the non-intelligent *pradhāna* cannot be considered to possess the power of thinking even in a secondary sense (*gauṇa*).

(b) In this particular Upaniṣadic passage, the aspirant for *mokṣa* is taught that knowledge of *sat* (Brahman) leads to *mokṣa.* If *sat* were *pradhāna,* then it would amount to teaching a non-self, which is not what is sought for.[4] Besides, it would run counter to the statement made in the beginning of the passage, viz., that by knowing Brahman or *ātman* everything else would be known.[1]

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[1] *VS,* I.1.5.

[2] *Ch. Up.,* VI.2.1: *Sadeva somya idam agra asīd-ekameva-advitīyam … tad-aikṣata bahusyām prajāyeyeti tat tejo'asṛjata.*

[3] *VS,* I.1.6-11 acc. *SB*; *VS,* I.1.6-12 acc. *RB.*

[4] *VS,* I.1.7: *Tanniṣṭasya mokṣopadeśāt.*

(c) In this passage, we come across a statement which says that the individual soul during the state of deep sleep dissolves or rests itself in *sat* which is its source or cause. If *sat* were *pradhāna*, such a dissolution would not be possible because the Sāṁkhyas do not admit *pradhāna* as the causal substance for the sentient souls.

(d) All the Upaniṣadic texts speak of only a sentient Being as the cause of the universe.

(e) In the very Upaniṣadic passage, *sat* is spoken as the one which manifests itself as the manifold universe.

Thus, Bādarāyaṇa conclusively establishes that only Brahman as the sentient Being is the cause of the universe and not *pradhāna*.

While Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja have some common agreement on the import of the main *sūtra*, Madhva adopts a totally different interpretation. He takes the word *aśabdam* to mean inexpressible (*avācya*). That Brahman is inexpressible (*aśabdam*) is regarded by Madhva as the prima facie view on the basis of such scriptural texts that describe Brahman as *avācya*. The negative particle *na* means that it is not so. The reason advanced is that it is an object of knowledge (*īkṣateḥ*) as stated in the Upaniṣadic texts which speak of Brahman being intuited by the individual self.[2] According to Madhva, there is no justification to bring up the theory of *pradhāna* as the cause of the universe.

Though Madhva and his followers put up a strong defence in favour of such an interpretation of the *sūtra*, it is doubtful if Bādarāyaṇa has in mind the theory of *avācyatva* of Brahman in the present context. As explained earlier, with reference to the preceding *sūtras* affirming that Brahman as the cause of the universe, it is reasonable to assume that the present *sūtra* (I.1.15) has a direct reference to the passage of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* dealing with the creation of the universe, in which the expression *tat aikṣata* or 'that resolved' is specifically used and the same term is used in the *sūtra* as well. Besides, all the subsequent six *sūtras* in the *adhikaraṇa* contain additional arguments to support that *pradhāna* is not the cause of the universe.

[1] *VS*, I.1.9 acc. *RB*: *Pratijñā-virodhāt.*

[2] *Praśna Up.*, V.5: *Sa etasmāt jīvaghanāt parātparaṁ puriśayaṁ puruṣam īkṣate.* Also *Kaṭha Up.*, I.2.15: *Sarve vedā yatpadam āmananti.*

The purpose of this *adhikaraṇa*, as indicated by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, is to bring out the important point that Brahman as the cause of the universe is endowed with intelligence or the capacity to resolve (*īkṣaṇatva*) unlike the non-sentient *pradhāna* of the Sāṁkhya. By implication it would follow that Brahman as the sentient Being is *saviśeṣa* or one qualified with attributes and not *nirviśeṣa* or an undifferentiated Being. Śaṁkara also tacitly admits in his comment that the omniscient Brahman is the cause of the universe (*tasmāt sarvajñam brahma jagataḥ kāraṇam*). Rāmānuja openly points out that Brahman as *cit* or pure consciousness devoid of all differentiation is not supported by the Sūtrakāra, since he states explicitly that it possesses knowledge as an attribute in the primary sense of the term (*mukhya-īkṣaṇādi guṇa yoga*).

BRAHMAN AS ĀNANDAMAYA

After having established that Brahman as the cause of the universe is other than the non-sentient primordial cosmic matter, Bādarāyaṇa proceeds to show that Brahman is blissful in nature (*ānandamaya*) and as such it is distinct from the sentient souls or what is generally regarded as *jīvātman*. The Ānandamayādhikaraṇa comprising a group of eight *sūtras* is devoted to discuss this point in great detail. The main *sūtra* reads: *Ānandamayo abhyāsāt,*[1] which means that (Brahman) is constituted of bliss because of the repetition of the term *ānanda* in respect of Brahman in the Upaniṣads. The fuller implication of the *sūtra* needs to be understood with reference to the passage of the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* to which it has a direct bearing. This passage teaches about the nature of Brahman for purposes of easy comprehension in five stages as *annamaya* or constituted of food, *prāṇamaya* or constituted of vital breath, as *manomaya* or constituted as mind, as *vijñānamaya* or constituted of knowledge (individual self) and *ānandamaya* or constituted of bliss. Brahman is first conceived as *annamaya* because food sustains the body in which the soul resides. But this is transcended by the concept of Brahman as *prāṇamaya* because life breath is of greater importance for sustenance of life. This is again transcended by Brahman as *manomaya*, because mind is important for the function of the body. This is superseded by *vijñānamaya* or of the nature of the *vijñāna*, understood as the individual soul, which is more important than the *manas*. Brahman as *vijñānamaya* is further transcended by the concept of *ātman* as *ānandamaya*. The Upaniṣadic text reads: *tasmādvā etasmāt vijñāna-mayāt; anyontara ātmā ānanda mayaḥ.*[1] The meaning of this statement is that other than this *vijñānamaya*, another *ātman* is *ānandamaya*. This is a crucial text which is open to different interpretations giving room for controversy. The main issue raised in this connection is whether the so-called *ātman* which is described as *ānandamaya* or constituted of bliss is the *jīvātman* or is it the Brahman. The prima facie view which comes up for consideration is that it is *jīvātman* or the individual self. The main argument advanced in favour of *jīvātman*, as explained in *Śaṁkara Bhāṣya*, is that the *ānandamaya* is also described as *śārīra ātmā*, which means that it is a soul encased in the physical body, as in the case of the earlier concepts such as *annamaya*, *prāṇamaya*, *manomaya* and *vijñānamaya*. What is associated with a body cannot obviously be Brahman.

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[1] *VS*, I.1.12 acc. *SB* and *MSB*; 1.1.13 acc. *RB*.

Rāmānuja, on the other hand, explains this *pūrvapakṣa* on the basis of the assumption that *jīva* and Brahman are not different, and that what is described as *ānandamaya* is the *jīvātma-svarūpa*. One other reason for supporting the prima facie view is that the Upaniṣad describes it as *śārīra ātmā* or a soul encased in the body.

The *sūtra* rejects this prima facie view and affirms that Brahman is *ānandamaya* because the term *ānanda* is repeatedly used in the Upaniṣadic texts in respect of Brahman. This is the implication of the term *abhyāsāt* mentioned in the *sūtra*, according to Śaṁkara. He quotes along with the relevant texts of the *Taittirīya* passage, several other Upaniṣadic texts which speak of Brahman as *ānanda*. Rāmānuja interprets this word with reference to the later part of the *Taittirīya Upaniṣadic* passage in which the infinite character of *ānanda* of Brahman is enunciated by comparing it progressively to the *ānanda* of human beings, the celestial beings, *prajāpati* or Brahmā, the Vedic deity. This passage begins with the statement *saiṣā ānandasya mīmāṁsā bhavati* or that we enter into the inquiry concerning *ānanda*. Each stage is exceeded by the next one until the stage of the *ānanda* of Brahman is reached, from whence, as the Upaniṣad itself states, even words or speech recede from further description. Whatever meaning is attached to the word *abhyāsāt* it is obvious that according to Bādarāyaṇa what is *ānandamaya* is only Brahman and not *jīvātman*. That this is the view of Bādarāyaṇa becomes evident from the subsequent *sūtras*[1] in which he himself advances additional arguments to support his view by way of repudiating a few important objections. The main points brought out in these *sūtras* are the following:

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[1] *Tait. Up.*, II.5.

(a) The affix *mayaṭ* to the term *ānanda* does not imply the sense of modification (*vikāra*) as in the case of *annamaya* because *mayaṭ* also denotes abundance (*prācurya*). It would mean that Brahman is constituted of *ānanda* in abundance.

(b) Since the Upaniṣad speaks of Brahman as the one which causes joy (*ānandayāti*) *mayaṭ* is to be taken in the sense of abundance.

(c) The same Brahman which is sung in the *mantra* portion of the Vedas (Upaniṣad) is proclaimed as *ānandamaya* in the *Brāhmaṇa* passage.

(d) The entity which is declared as *ānandamaya* cannot be considered as the individual self because the capacity of resolving to become many attributed to Brahman does not hold good in respect of *jīvātman* with limited powers (*netaro anupapatteḥ*).

(e) The very Upaniṣadic texts speak of difference between *jīvātman* and *Paramātman (bheda vyapadeśācca)*.

(f) The realization or the communion with the *ānandamaya* by the individual self brings release (*tadbhāvāpattiḥ muktiḥ*) according to Śaṁkara or the blissful state of existence (*ānanda-yogam*) according to Rāmānuja.

After elaborately arguing in favour of the view as set out by Bādarāyaṇa that what is described in the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* as *ānandamaya* is Brahman and not *jīvātman*, Śaṁkara offers a different interpretation in his comment on the last *sūtra* of this *adhikaraṇa*.[2] Keeping in mind his theory of two Brahmans—*para*, the higher undifferentiated Brahman and *apara*, the lower Brahman conditioned by *māyā*, he argues that the entity described as *ānandamaya* in the Upaniṣad does not apply to the higher Brahman but on the contrary, it refers to the conditioned self or *jīva* in its highest. The main objection for not accepting *ānandamaya* as Brahman is that its description in terms of *śārīrātmā* or embodied *ātman* (soul encased in body) and as *priya* or joy as head, *moda* and *pramoda* as arms and

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[1] *VS*, I.1.13-19 acc. *SB*; I.1.14-20 acc. *RB*.

[2] *VS*, I.1.19: *Asminnasya ca tadyogam śāsti*.

puccha[1] or tail (support) cannot be the Brahman. Surprisingly, Śaṁkara considers the statement *brahma puccham pratiṣṭā* or Brahman as the support of all as the true Brahman and advances sufficient arguments to support this view. The term *pucca* is interpreted as the transcendent support (foundation) of all empirical selves or *jīvas* (*puccavat puccham pratiṣṭā parāyaṇam ekaniḍam*) and it does not imply any kind of bodily form. The term *ānandamaya* used in the *sūtra* and also in the Upaniṣad does not represent the true Brahman but the conditioned self. The true Brahman is bliss (*ānanda)* since what is repeatedly said in the Upaniṣads is only in respect of such a Brahman and not *ānandamaya* Brahman.

Rāmānuja refutes all these arguments of Śaṁkara. In the first place he does not admit the theory that *jīva* and Brahman are identical. *Jīva* is definitely different from Brahman as Bādarāyaṇa himself states. Both the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* and the *sūtra* speak of Brahman as *ānandamaya.* In this connection he elaborately discusses the true import of the crucial Upaniṣadic text *tattvamasi,* which is quoted by Advaitin in support of the theory of identity of *jīva* and Brahman. He also explains in detail the true implication of the *samānādhikaraṇa vākya* or the statement where the terms are found in apposition and conclusively establishes that the terms which connote different qualities denote only one entity as qualified by them.[2] He also rejects the view of *pucca brahma* as different from *ānandamaya brahma.* The same *ānandamaya brahma* is symbolically described in terms of head, arms, tail, etc. The word *śarīra ātmā* does not mean embodied soul but on the contrary, it denotes Brahman as the soul (*ātman*) of *anna, prāṇa, manas, vijñāna.* In the case of *ānandamaya,* the affix *mayaṭ* does not indicate any modification but it means *ānanda* in abundance or infinite bliss (*niratiśaya ānanda*).

Madhva joins hands with Rāmānuja in refuting Śaṁkara's theory of two Brahmans and in particular his theory of *pucca brahma.* He does not bring up a prima facie theory of *ānandamaya* as the *jīvātman* since the term *ānandamaya* denotes Viṣṇu and not any other entity. The affix *mayaṭ* is taken in the sense of superabundance and Brahman is therefore blissful. He interprets all the other terms such as *ānnamaya, prāṇamaya,* etc. as the names of five forms of Brahman present in the five *koṣas* or sheaths. The term *ānandamaya* used in the *sūtra* is an *upalakṣaṇa* or illustration for others. The attribution of head, limbs, tail, etc. to Brahman is to be taken as Brahman in essence since Brahman cannot have parts.

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[1] See *Tait. Up.,* II.5: *Tasya priyameva śiraḥ; modo dakṣiṇaḥ pakṣaḥ pramoda uttara pakṣaḥ ānanda ātmā; brahma puccam pratiṣṭā.*

[2] See *Patañjali Mahābhāṣya: Bhinna pravṛttinimittānānām śabadānām ekasmin arthe vṛttiḥ sāmānādhikaraṇyam.*

We need not go into the details of criticisms and counter criticisms of the commentators to defend their own interpretations. What is important for us to note in this *adhikaraṇa* is the view of Bādarāyaṇa as expressed in this *sūtra.* As explained earlier it is clear from the wording of the *sūtra* which reads as *ānandamayo abhāyasāt* and the seven subsequent *sūtras,* Bādarāyaṇa intends to convey the truth that Brahman is full of bliss. In other words, Brahman is essentially of the nature of *ānanda* or bliss and it is also qualified with *ānanda* as an essential attribute, as Rāmānuja and Madhva maintain. In stating this, Bādarāyaṇa does not seem to have in his mind the theory of *nirviśeṣa* Brahman, as Śaṁkara assumes, since an attribution of bliss to such an ontological entity is logically untenable. Obviously when Bādarāyaṇa uses the term *ānandamaya* on the basis of the Upaniṣad, he means *saviśeṣa* Brahman. The theory of *pucca* Brahman as something different from the *ānandamaya* Brahman does not seem to fit with the import of the *sūtra* if it is interpreted in a straightforward way.

BRAHMAN AS DISTINCT FROM CELESTIAL DEITIES

In the earlier sections it was pointed out that Brahman as the source of the universe is different from the primordial cosmic matter (*pradhāna*) and also the sentient *jīvātman.* In the subsequent *adhikaraṇas* Bādarāyaṇa states that Brahman is different from the exalted individual souls.

The *adhikaraṇa* named as Antaradhikaraṇa[1] covering two *sūtras* takes up the question whether or not the effulgent *Puruṣa* of golden colour posited in the sun and also inside the eye is the exalted *jīvātman* or *Paramātman* (Brahman). The *sūtra* reads: *antaḥ tad dharmopadeśāt,*[2] which means the one within (*antaḥ*) is Brahman because of its characteristics being taught (*tad-dharmopadeśāt*). According to both Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, this aphorism has a reference to the passage in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* which provides the fuller meaning of the *sūtra*. The Upaniṣad states: "Now that person lustrous as gold who is seen within the sun, with beard and hair bright as gold and altogether golden even to the very tips of his nails, whose eyes are like the freshly blossomed lotus; his name is *ut*, for he has risen above all evil. An individual who comprehends this fact rises above all evil" (*atha ya eso antarāditye hiraṇmayaḥ puruṣo dṛśyate*).[1] Another passage refers to the person who is seen within the eye and describes him as the one who is Ṛk, Sāman, Uktha, Yajus, and Brahman (*atha ya eṣo antarakṣiṇi puruṣo dṛśyate*).[2] Both these passages speak the presence of a Divine Person (*Puruṣa*) within the sun and also inside the eye as possessed of a physical form. The description of the Person in terms of a physical body with golden colour, with eyes similar to the lotus etc. gives room for the doubt whether such a Being could be Brahman. It is therefore appropriate that both Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja commence their interpretation of the *sūtra* with a prima facie view supporting that the *Puruṣa* in question is the exalted *jīvātman*. The main argument in support of this theory is that such a physical description cannot be applicable to Brahman who is formless. According to both Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, Bādarāyaṇa rejects the prima facie view on the basis of the fact that the characteristics stated in the Upaniṣadic passages are applicable only to *Paramātman*. The description of this *Puruṣa* as the one who has risen above all evil and as the one who is free from all evil and who can also remove the sins of those who visualize him, cannot be applicable to an individual soul however meritorious he may be. Such a *Puruṣa* can only be *Paramātman*.

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[1] This is named as Antaḥsthatvādhikaraṇa in *MSB.*

[2] *VS,* I.1.20 acc. *SB*; I.1.21 acc. *RB.*

How can a Supreme Being possess a body of golden lustre, golden hair, eyes like lotus, etc.? This is a possible objection which is anticipated by the commentators. In reply to this objection, Śaṁkara points out that *Paramātman* assumes a bodily shape formed of *māyā* as and when He pleases for the sake of bestowing grace on His devout worshippers (*syāt parameśvarasyāpi iccāvaśāt māyāmayam rūpam sādhakānugrahārtham*). While Rāmānuja does not question this explanation, he adds on the strength of the doctrine of *avatāra* or incarnation, that the divine spiritual form referred to in the Upaniṣad is *svābhāvika* or true manifestation taken by *Paramātman* out of His own will for the purpose of *upāsanā* by the devotees. By implication, it means that it is not an illusory appearance of Brahman but it is its real manifestation. In other words Brahman is one who is endowed with the spiritual divine form.[1] The description of *Puruṣa* with eyes similar to a lotus (*puṇḍarīkākṣa*) is also regarded by Rāmānuja as Supreme Deity in the name of Nārāyaṇa or Viṣṇu, since the Itihāsas and Purāṇas speak of such eyes exclusively in respect of Him. As this *sūtra* is based on the *Chāndogya Upaniṣadic* text, it is but appropriate to assume that Bādarāyaṇa intends to convey the fact that Brahman is a Supreme Being with a spiritual body.

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[1] *Ch. Up.*, I.6.6.

[2] Ibid., I.7.1.

Madhva draws as *viṣaya-vākya* for this *sūtra* the scriptural statements from *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka,* where the descriptive epithet *antasthaḥ* is mentioned, though the passage of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* clearly provides the basis for the *sūtra* as the term *antara* is found in it. The *pūrvapakṣa* he brings up here is that *adṛśyatva* or incomprehensibility and *anātmya* or all-rulership attributed to *ānandamaya* Brahman in the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* apply to other deities such as Indra, Sūrya and Varuṇa. In the opinion of Madhva, such a *pūrvapakṣa* is refuted in the present *sūtra* by declaring that the Being within Indra, Vāyu, Varuṇa, etc. is Viṣṇu only.[2] Whatever may be the justification for choosing such a line of argument, the conclusion reached is that the Being within (*antasthaḥ*) is Viṣṇu or Brahman.

As for as Bādarāyaṇa is concerned, it is obvious that he regards Brahman as the Supreme Being possessing a spiritual divine form and that it is different from the exalted individual souls. In the subsequent *sūtras* he explicitly emphasizes the difference between the two (*bheda vyapadeśācca anyaḥ*).[3] Both Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja reaffirm the distinction between *Paramātman* and *jīva* of Āditya and other deities by quoting the texts of *Antaryāmī Brāhmaṇa* of *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* which states that *Paramātman* indwells in Āditya etc. and thereby indicating the difference between the two.

In another *adhikaraṇa* (Antarādhikaraṇa) included in the second *pāda* of the first *adhyāya,* Bādarāyaṇa states specifically that the *Puruṣa* is neither the *jīvātman* nor the celestial deity (*devatā*) but Brahman only. The relevant *sūtra* reads: *antara upapatteḥ.*[4] It means

[1] *RB,* I.1.21: *Parasyaiva brahmaṇaḥ…divyarūpamapi svābhāvikam asti.*

[2] See *MSB,* I.1.20: *Antaḥ śrūyamāṇo viṣṇureva.*

[3] *VS,* I.1.21 acc. *SB;* I.1.22 acc. *RB.*

[4] *VS,* I.2.13.

that the Person seen inside the eye is Brahman, because of the relevance of attributes mentioned in the Upaniṣads. This *sūtra* is also based on the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad.* The Upaniṣad states: "That person who is seen inside the eye is *Ātman.* This is the immortal, the fearless."[1] In the later part of the same passage, it is described as infinite bliss (*kaṁ* and *khaṁ*) and also as blessedness (*vāmāni*) and splendour (*bhāmāni*). On the basis of these statements the Sūtrakāra asserts that the *Puruṣa* seen inside the eye is Brahman and that He is also distinct from the celestial deities.

Allied to the theory of the celestial deity such as Āditya being different from Brahman, Bādarāyaṇa points out that even Indra, the higher celestial deity cannot be the cause of the Universe. This matter is discussed in a separate *adhikaraṇa* known as Pratardanādhikaraṇa according to Śaṁkara and Indraprāṇādhikaraṇa according to Rāmānuja. The main *sūtra* of this *adhikaraṇa* reads: *prāṇaḥ tathānugamāt.* According to the *Śaṁkara Bhāṣya,* it means that *prāṇa* (breath) is Brahman, that being understood from a connected consideration (of the passages to *prāṇa*). According to the *Rāmānuja Bhāṣya,* it means that the term *prāṇa* referred to by Indra denotes Brahman because this term (*Indra-prāṇa*) is correlated with the terms such as *ānanda, ajara* and *amṛta.*

According to both Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, this *sūtra* has a reference to the *pratardana vidyā* of the *Kauśītakī Brāhmaṇa.* In a dialogue between Pratardana and Indra, Indra in response to a request from Pratardana to grant him such a boon, as is considered to be the highest good for a human being, states: "I am *prāṇa* (life breath) the intelligent self, thou meditate on me as *āyuḥ* (life), *amṛtam* (immortality) (*prāṇo'smi prajñātmā taṁ māṁ ayūramṛtam iti upāsva*)."[2] The question that is raised here is whether the meditation suggested by Indra is on the individual soul denoted by the term *prāṇa* or Brahman who is other than that. In this connection, Śaṁkara raises four alternatives: Does *prāṇa* mean breath only, or the self of a *devatā* (*devatātmā*), or an individual soul (*jīva*) or *parabrahma.* Rāmānuja confines to two alternatives: either *jīva* or *Paramātman.* The prima facie view is that *prāṇa* here applies to the individual soul, since Indra instructs *pratardana* to meditate on him. According to both Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, the Sūtrakāra rejects this view and

[1] *Ch. Up.,* IV.15.1: *Ya eṣo akṣiṇi puruṣo dṛśyate eṣa ātmā iti hovaca, etad amṛtaṁ abhayaṁ etad brahmeti.*

[2] *Kauśītakī Up.,* III.1.2.

states that the *prāṇa* here refers to Brahman. The reason advanced in support of it is that in the context of the earlier and later statements made by Indra as recorded in the Upaniṣad, the term *prāṇa* is correlated with the ideas of immortality, bliss and imperishability, which are all applicable to Brahman only. Besides, in response to the request of Pratardana seeking what is considered to be most beneficial to a human being, Indra suggests meditation on *prāṇa.* Unless *prāṇa* is Brahman, it cannot constitute the highest good for the humankind.

If the main spokesman (*vaktā*) here is Indra, who is fully aware of himself being an individual soul, how can the *prāṇa* referred to by him be regarded as Brahman? This is an objection which is raised by Sūtrakāra himself and the same is replied appropriately by him in this and the next two *sūtras.*[1] The words used in the *sūtras* allow for more than one interpretation by the commentators involving exegetical details and we may overlook them. We need to take note of one important point that is brought up here by Bādarāyaṇa in the *sūtra* which points out that Indra is justified in advising Pratardana to meditate on him on the basis of *śāstradṛṣṭi.* The term *śāstradṛṣṭi* is explained by Śaṁkara as the intuitive spiritual knowledge leading to the realization of identity of soul and Brahman. Rāmānuja on the other hand, explains it as knowledge leading to the comprehension that the *jīvātman* is the *śarīra* (body) of *Paramātman* as taught in the *Antaryāmī Brāhmaṇa* and other scriptural texts. Madhva takes this term in the sense of *antaryāmidṛṣṭi* or the standpoint of Brahman as the Inner Ruler of all. Indra as an enlightened person was gifted with this spiritual knowledge and hence he advises Pratardana to meditate on his soul. The Sūtrakāra cites the example of the Vedic sage, Vāmadeva who was gifted with such a knowledge.

Madhva chooses different scriptural statements, drawn from *Aitareya Āraṇyaka* where there are references to *prāṇa, jīvātman* and Indra and constructs a different *pūrvapakṣa* for all the three *sūtras.* Instead of the legend of Pratardana and Indra quoted in the *Kauṣītakī Upaniṣad,* he brings in the legend of sage Viśvāmitra and Indra narrated in the *Aitareya Āraṇyaka.* The prima facie view questions the terms *prāṇa,* Indra, etc., in favour of Brahman. These *sūtras,* as interpreted by Madhva reject it and establish that the term *prāṇa* referred to by Indra denotes Brahman as the *antaryāmin* of Indra. Though Madhva offers a different explanation, the final conclusion reached by him is the same as that of Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja and thereby reiterating the view of Bādarāyaṇa on these *adhikaraṇas*. Thus, Bādarāyaṇa is of the view that the terms Indra, *prāṇa*, etc. used in the scriptural texts do not refer to the soul of the higher celestial deities (Indra) but on the contrary they denote Brahman who is distinct from it.

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[1] *VS,* I.1.29-30 acc. *SB;* I.1.30-32 acc. *RB.*

BRAHMAN AS DISTINCT FROM NON-SENTIENT COSMIC ENTITIES

In the preceding sections, it is observed that Brahman is distinct (*arthāntarabhūta*) from the exalted individual souls such as the divine *Puruṣa* in the sun and the celestial deity (Indra). In the same way Bādarāyaṇa regards that Brahman is also different from non-sentient ontological entities, such as *ākāśa* or cosmic ether, *prāṇa* or vital breath, *jyotis* or cosmic light. These three are specifically mentioned in the Upaniṣadic passages which give the impression prima facie that they are either the very cause of the universe (in the case of *ākāśa* and *prāṇa*) or the highest spiritual Being (in the case of *jyotis*). This matter is therefore taken up for consideration in three separate *adhikaraṇas* named as Ākāśādhikaraṇa, Prāṇādhikaraṇa and Jyotiradhikaraṇa[1] with a view to clearing doubts and determining the true nature of Brahman as distinct from all such physical entities.

Regarding *ākāśa*, the *sūtra* reads: *ākāśaḥ tallingāt*[2] which means the cosmic ether (is Brahman) because of the characteristic marks (of Brahman). Its fuller meaning becomes more explicit if we examine the relevant passage of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* on the basis of which it is framed, as opined by the commentators. The Upaniṣad poses the question, "What is the origin of this world? and the reply is 'it is ether' (*ākāśa*) because all these beings originate from ether only and they are dissolved in ether. Ether is greater than these. Ether is their final goal (*parāyaṇam*)."[3] This description gives the impression that *ākāśa* as commonly understood in the sense of ethereal space or the physical element (*bhūtākāśa*) is the source of the universe and not Brahman.

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[1] This is named as Jyotiścaraṇādhikaraṇa in *SB*.

[2] *VS*, I.1.22 acc. *SB* and *MSB*; I.1.23 acc. *RB*.

[3] *Ch. Up.*, I.9.1.

Bādarāyaṇa rejects this view and upholds that the term *ākāśa* in the passage stands for Brahman. The reason advanced in support of this view, as explained by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, is that the characteristic marks (*liṅga*) attributed to *ākāśa* in the Upaniṣadic passage such as being the primary cause of the entire universe (*nikhila jagatkāraṇatvam*), being greatest of all (*jyāyastvam*) and being the final goal to be attained (*parāyaṇatvam*) are applicable only to Brahman and not to the ethereal space, which is the product of Brahman. In the Upaniṣads, the term *ākāśa* is often equated with Brahman. It is Brahman in the sense that it illumines everything else (*ākāśyati*) and it shines everywhere (*ākāśate*).

Regarding *prāṇa*, the *sūtra* briefly states: *ata eva prāṇaḥ*,[1] meaning breath (is Brahman) for the same reason. That is, the reason offered in respect of *ākāśa* in the earlier *sūtra*, namely, that the characteristics of Brahman, would equally hold in respect of *prāṇa*. The *Chāndogya* passage in reply to the query made to *prastota* priest regarding the deity which belongs to *prastāva*, states that 'breath' (*prāṇa*) is the deity belonging to *prastāva*, because all these beings merge into breath alone, and from breath they originate. According to the prima facie view, *prāṇa* is taken in the commonly understood sense of fivefold vital breath. This view is refuted by Bādarāyaṇa who affirms that *prāṇa* here refers to Brahman, because in the complementary passage mention is made of the important characteristic of Brahman, viz., that all beings enter into *prāṇa* alone and arise from it. Such a characteristic is not applicable to the *prāṇa* as vital breath. Brahman is *prāṇa* in the sense that it sustains all life (*prāṇayati sarvāṇi bhūtāni*).

As regards the *jyotis*, the *sūtra* reads: *jyotis-caraṇābhidhānāt*,[2] which means that cosmic light is Brahman because of the mention of the feet or part (in the Upaniṣadic passage connected with cosmic light). This *sūtra* also has a reference to the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* which helps to understand its fuller implication. The relevant passage states: "Now that light which shines above this heaven, higher than all, higher than everything, in the highest realms (worlds) beyond which there are no other worlds, that is the same light which is within man."[3] The question is raised here whether the *jyotis* mentioned in the passage refers to the physical light radiated by the sun and other luminaries or Brahman (*Paramātman*) which is the supreme Spiritual Light. The prima facie view is that it is the extraordinary light of the sun and like, which is the well established meaning of the term. A few other arguments are advanced in support of this view, as explained in the *Śaṁkara Bhāṣya.*

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[1] *VS*, I.23 acc. *SB*; I.1.24 acc. *RB*.

[2] *VS*, I.1.24 acc. *SB*; I.1.25 acc. *RB*.

[3] *Ch. Up.*, III.13.7: *Atha yadataḥ paro divo jyotiḥ dīpyate....*

The author of the *sūtra*, as interpreted by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja rejects this view and maintains that *jyotis* here refers to Brahman because in the preceding passage we come across a description of Brahman as having four feet or quarters. It says: "Such is the greatness of it; greater than it is the Supreme Person (*Puruṣa*). One foot or part of it represents all the beings, while three feet or quarters (*tripād*) are the immortal higher domain (*tripādasya amṛtam divi*[1]). The same Supreme Person who is connected with the three quarters of the higher abode is referred to in the present Upaniṣadic text as the light connected with the higher domain (*atha paro divo jyotiḥ*). Obviously this light referred to here denotes Brahman. As Śaṁkara explains, Brahman also stands for the supreme Spiritual Light as it gives light to all other luminaries. Thus the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*[2] states: "Him the shining one, everything shines after; by this light all this is lighted." The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* says: "Him the gods worship as the light of the lights as the immortal."[3]

Madhva has taken an altogether different view of these three *adhikaraṇas*. Except in the case of Ākāśādhikaraṇa, he refers to the statements in the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* as the *viṣayavākyas* for these *adhikaraṇas*. Naturally, the *pūrvapakṣa* stated by him differs from those advanced by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja. According to him, the prima facie views refer to an objection against treating the *adhibhūta* entities such as *ākāśa, tejas,* etc. and *adhyātma* principles like *prāṇa* occurring in the Vedic texts as Brahman. The *sūtras* under consideration, in his opinion, are intended to refute this objection and assert all such entities are to be understood as applicable to Viṣṇu, thereby establishing the *samanvaya* of even Vedic terms as Brahman. Though Madhva disagrees with Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja with regard to the *viṣayavākya* (except in respect of Ākāśādhikaraṇa) his conclusion does not differ from them.

[1] *Ch. Up.*, III.12.6: *Padosya sarvā bhūtāni tripādasya amṛtam divi.*

[2] *M. Up.*, II.2.10: *Tameva bhāntaṁ anubhāti sarvaṁ tasya bhāsa sarvam idam vibhāti.*

[3] *Br. Up.*, IV.4.16: *Taddevā jyotiṣāṁ jyotir-āyur-hopāsate amṛtam.*

Thus, on the basis of our analysis of the comments of the three *ācāryas*, it may be noted that Bādarāyaṇa is of the view that Brahman is distinct from the non-sentient cosmic entities such as *ākāśa* or the ether, *prāṇa* or the vital breath and *jyotis* or the physical light. The terms bearing these names which are employed in the Upaniṣads denote Brahman only and not the concerned physical entities, since they bear the characteristic marks that are applicable to *Paramātman*.

Chapter 3

The Distinguishing Characteristics of Brahman

In the earlier chapter we have examined how Bādarāyaṇa enunciates the essential nature of Brahman in the first *pāda* of the first *adhyāya* of *Brahmasūtra.* We have seen that Brahman is the primary cause of the universe (*jagat-kāraṇa*). As a sentient Being endowed with omniscience and omnipotence, it is distinct from the primordial cosmic matter (*pradhāna*) and all other non-sentient entities. As *ānandamaya* or blissful, it is also distinct from the *jīvātman* and all other higher celestial deities. In the second and third *pādas*, Bādarāyaṇa brings out a few other distinguishing characteristics of Brahman. As these are important to understand the nature of Brahman as the Ultimate Reality, we shall discuss them in the present chapter.

Most of the *sūtras* except a few do not explicitly mention the *dharmas* or characteristics of Brahman. But the Upaniṣadic texts on the basis of which the *sūtras* are generally framed refer to them. The important passages of the principal Upaniṣads dealing with Brahman employ terms which are not clear as to whether they refer to Brahman or some other ontological entities such as *jīvātman*. By way of clarifying such doubts, Bādarāyaṇa brings out the essential characteristics of Brahman which are specifically stated in the Upaniṣads.

The important *dharmas* which are either explicitly mentioned in the *sūtras* or brought out indirectly through the Upaniṣadic texts are the following:

Brahman as *Sarvātmā* or the Self of All.
Brahman as *Attā* or the Eater.
Brahman as *Antaryāmin* or the Inner Controller.
Brahman as *Akṣara* or the Imperishable Reality.
Brahman as *Vaiśvānara* or the Ruler of All Souls.

Brahman as *Āyatana* or the Abode of Heaven and Earth.
Brahman as *Bhūmā* or the Infinitely Great.
Brahman as *Daharākāśa* or the Subtle Space within the human heart.

We shall examine the *adhikaraṇas* dealing with each one of these characteristics of Brahman.

BRAHMAN AS SARVĀTMĀ OR THE SELF OF ALL

This is an important characteristic of Brahman which is prominently brought out in the opening *adhikaraṇa* of the second *pāda* of first *adhyāya* known as Sarvatraprasiddhyadhikaraṇa comprising eight *sūtras.*[1] Though the main *sūtra* does not mention this attribute, the statement of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* which constitutes the *viṣaya-vākya* for the *sūtra* refers to it. The *sūtra* reads: *sarvatra prasiddhopadeśāt.*[2] The word *sarvatra,* according to Śaṁkara, means everywhere, that is, in all the Upaniṣads (*sarveṣu vedānteṣu*). *Prasiddha upadeśa* means that which is well established is taught. The fuller meaning of it can be made out with reference to the passage of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad.* The opening statement of this passage says: "Verily, all this is Brahman, because all this originates from, ends in and is sustained by Brahman. Thus knowing, one should meditate with calm mind."[3] The subsequent statement says: "Man is indeed of the nature of thought (meditation); he becomes in his supramundane state after departing from this life what he meditates upon in this life. Let him, therefore, practise meditation. Let him meditate on that one which consists of mind (*manomaya*), which has *prāṇa* or breath as its body (*prāṇaśarīra*) and whose form is light (*bhārūpaḥ*)."[4] The opening sentence of the passage deals with Brahman as it describes the threefold cosmic function which is only applicable to the Supreme Self. The subsequent sentence describes the object of meditation in terms such as *manomaya, prāṇaśarīra,* and *bhārūpa.* The latter statement gives room for doubt as to whether the object of meditation is the individual self (*jīvātman*) or the Supreme Self (*paramātmā*). The prima facie view is that it refers to the individual self because *manas* and *prāṇa* are associated with it and not with Brahman which is devoid of both as declared in the Upaniṣadic text (*aprāṇohyamanāḥ śubhraḥ*).[1]

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[1] *VS,* I.2.1-8.

[2] *VS,* I.2.1.

[3] *Ch. Up.,* III.14.1: *Sarvaṁ khalu idaṁ Brahma tajjalān iti śānta upāsīta.*

[4] Ibid.: *Sa kratuṁ kurvīta, manomayaḥ prāṇaśarīro bhārūpaḥ.*

The Sūtrakāra, as interpreted by Śaṁkara, rejects this view. The reason for the rejection is that the same Brahman which is well established in all the Upaniṣads as the cause of the universe (*sarvatra prasiddha*), is referred to in the opening sentence of the passage. It is the same Brahman which is taught in the subsequent statement for the purpose of meditation as qualified with attributes such as *manomayatva* etc. (*tadeva manomayatvādi dharmaiḥ viśiṣṭam upadiśyate*). Since Brahman dwells in *jīvātman* also, the association of mind and breath do mediately characterize it (*sarvātmatvāt hi brahmaṇo jīvasambandhīni manomayatvādīni brahmasambandhīni bhavanti*). This is the explanation of the *sūtra* by Śaṁkara.

Rāmānuja offers a slightly different interpretation in two ways. In the first interpretation of the *sūtra,* he leaves out the opening sentence of the Upaniṣad as it is regarded to refer to the meditation of Brahman with calmness and confines the explanation to the subsequent statements which specifically enjoins meditation on Brahman as *manomaya* etc. Accordingly the word *sarvatra* in the *sūtra* is taken in the same sense as Śaṁkara states, viz., in all the Upaniṣads (*sarvatra vedānteṣu*). The words *manomaya, prāṇamaya,* etc. are taken to mean Brahman and not *jīvātman* for the reason that in several Upaniṣads it is well established that Brahman is *manomaya* and *prāṇaśarīra.* He quotes a few Upaniṣadic texts which contain such a description of Brahman. Thus says the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad:* He who is made of mind, the guide of the body of breath.[2] The term *manomaya* is applicable to Brahman because Brahman is to be apprehended only by purified mind (*viśuddhena manasā grāhyatvam*). *Prāṇaśarīra* means that Brahman is the supporter (*ādhāra*) and the Ruler of *prāṇa* (*prāṇasyāpi ādhāratvam niyantṛtvam ca*).

According to the second interpretation covering both the opening statement enjoining the meditation with calmness and the subsequent statements enjoining the *upāsanā* on what is described as *manomaya* etc., the word *sarvatra* in the *sūtra* is understood in the sense of everything in the universe (*sarvasmin jagati*) as implied by the words *idam sarvam* used in the Upaniṣad.[1] The Upaniṣadic text *sarvaṁ khalvidaṁ brahma,* implies, according to Rāmānuja, that Brahman is the entire universe in the sense that it is the *Ātman* or the Self of everything in the universe which constitutes the *śarīra* or body of Brahman in a technical sense (*param brahma hi-cid-acid vastu śarīratayā sarvātma-bhūtam*). Accordingly, the terms *manomaya, prāṇaśarīra,* etc., constitute the *dharmas* or attributes of Brahman. The meditation on Brahman as the cause of the universe which is enjoined in the opening statement in a general way is made more specific in the subsequent statement by indicating that Brahman as qualified by the attributes of *manomayatva, prāṇaśarīratva,* etc., is to be meditated. The words *prasiddha upadeśa* in the *sūtra* means, according to this interpretation, that Brahman as the cause of the universe which is so well established in the Upaniṣads is stated in the opening statement of the present passage as the word *khalu* or verily implies. It is such a Brahman in terms of *manomaya* that is to be meditated upon.

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[1] *M. Up.*, II.1.2.

[2] Ibid.: *Manomayaḥ prāṇaśarīra netā.* See also *Kena Up.*, 1.2: *prāṇasya prāṇaḥ.*

We need not go into the relative merits of these interpretations of the *sūtra* and the connected Upaniṣadic texts offered by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja. The important point to be noted for our purpose is that Bādarāyaṇa who has framed this *sūtra* with reference to the famous *Chāndogya* text equating Brahman with *jagat,* intends to convey the view that Brahman is the *Ātman* or the Self of everything in the universe (*sarvātmā* or *sarvātmaka*) and it is qualified with attributes such as *manomayatva, prāṇa-śarīratva* and *bhārūpatva.*

The subsequent *sūtra* confirms that the Upaniṣadic passage under consideration speaks of other important attributes with which Brahman is qualified. The *sūtra* reads *vivakṣita guṇopapatteśca.*[2] It means, as interpreted by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, that the attributes which are intended to be conveyed by the Upaniṣadic statement for the purpose of meditation are applicable to Brahman. The Upaniṣad mentions several other *guṇas,* besides *manomaya, prāṇa śarīra* and *bhārūpa* with which Brahman is to be meditated (*upāsanāyām upādeyatvena upadiṣṭā guṇāḥ*).[3] These are: *satyasaṅkalpa, ākāśātmā, sarvakarma, sarvakāmaḥ, sarvagandhaḥ, sarvarasaḥ* and *anādaraḥ.*

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[1] Sūtrakāra has used the term *sarvatra* instead of *sarvam* mentioned in the Upaniṣad with a view to indicating that there is *bheda* or difference between *jagat* and Brahman and not *tādātmya.*

[2] *VS,* I.2.2.

[3] *SB,* I.2.2.

Satyasaṅkalpa means one whose will is unobstructed (*apratihata saṅkalpa*). *Ākāśātmā* means, according to Śaṁkara, one whose soul is like the all-pervasive ether. It implies the omnipresent character of Brahman like all-pervasive ether. Rāmānuja means by this term that Brahman is the soul of *ākāśa*. *Sarvakarma* means one who is the author of the created universe (*sarvam jagat yasya karma asau sarvakarma*). *Sarvakāma* means that all objects of desire are His. *Sarvagandha* means containing all odour and *sarvarasa* means containing all taste. *Anādaraḥ* means one who is indifferent because there is nothing that needs to be fulfilled. Though these terms are interpreted slightly differently by the commentators, it is admitted by both that Brahman as the primary cause of the universe is qualified by several attributes. Śaṁkara, however, adds a note that these attributes are applicable to the lower Brahman or the *Saguṇa* Brahman and not to the higher or *Śuddha* Brahman which is *nirviśeṣa* or undifferentiated. Whether or not Bādarāyaṇa accepts the theory of two Brahmans is a disputed issue which will be discussed separately. For the present we may note that the *sūtras* as they are worded speak of one Brahman which is *saviśeṣa* or qualified with attributes.

Madhva differs from Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja in the interpretation of this important *sūtra*. He draws as the *viṣaya-vākya* for this *sūtra* a scriptural text from the *Aitareya Āraṇyaka* in which mention is made of Brahman as present everywhere (*sarvagata*).[1] He designates this *adhikaraṇa* as Sarvagatatvādhikaraṇa. Accordingly the *sūtra* is intended to convey that Brahman is omnipresent. All the subsequent *sūtras* of this *adhikaraṇa* are interpreted to fit with this thesis. While we may not dispute with such an interpretation upholding Brahman's *sarvagatatva* which is implied in the term *sarvātmatva* or *sarvātmakatva* used by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, it is doubtful whether Bādarāyaṇa intended to frame the *sūtra* on the basis of the text from the *Aitareya Āraṇyaka*, for the reason that the *Chāndogya Upaniṣadic* texts are predominantly adopted for most of the *adhikaraṇas* covered in the second and third *pādas*. However the conclusion reached by Madhva does not radically differ from that of Rāmānuja and Śaṁkara. It may therefore be taken that Bādarāyaṇa is of the view that Brahman is *sarvātmā* or the self of everything in the universe or *sarvagata*, as Madhva says.

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[1] *AA*, III.2.3: *Etam hi-eva bahvṛcā mahatyukthe mīmāṁsante…etam agnau, etam divi, etam vayau, etam ākāśe…sarveṣu bhūteṣu etameva brahmeti ācakṣate.*

BRAHMAN AS ATTĀ OR THE EATER

A passage in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* describes *Ātman* symbolically as the one for whom Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas are food and death is itself the condiment.[1] The words food and condiment suggest that the *Ātman* referred to here is the eater (*attā*). Based on this Upaniṣadic text Bādarāyaṇa states that Brahman is *attā* or the eater. The relevant *sūtra* reads: *attā carācara grahaṇāt*[2] which means the eater (is the *Paramātman*) because of the mention of what is movable and what is immovable.

Though the wording of the *sūtra* appears to be unambiguous, the question arises whether such a physical activity of eating is applicable to Brahman, the highest metaphysical Reality. The prima facie view is therefore advanced that the individual self (*jīvātman*) is the eater since it is subjected to *karma*. The *sūtra*, as interpreted by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, rejects it and upholds that it is the highest Self or Brahman which is *attā*, because the terms 'Brahma' and 'Kṣatra' together with *mṛtyu* used in the Upaniṣad symbolically represent the entire created world comprising the movable (*cara*) and immovable (*acara*) entities. *Jīva* cannot consume the entire universe. *Paramātman* is therefore the *attā*.

The act of eating here symbolically represents the dissolution (*saṁhāra*) of the entire universe by *Paramātman*. As the primary cause of creation and sustenance of the universe, Brahman also withdraws it from the state of manifestation into itself. In this sense the characteristic of *attratva* is attributed to Brahman.

Madhva also arrives at the same conclusion, although he chooses as the *viṣaya-vākya* for this *sūtra* a statement from the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*. The text says: "Whatever He brought forth, that He resolved to eat. He eats everything. Hence the all-devourership of Aditi."[3] According to the prima facie view developed on the basis of this text, Aditi, a female deity is regarded as the eater. The Sūtrakāra, as interpreted by Madhva, rejects this view and affirms that Brahman is the eater in the sense that it dissolves the universe which is one of its important functions.

In connection with the theory of Brahman as *attā*, the question is raised on the basis of another statement of *Kaṭha Upaniṣad,* whether it can be the enjoyer of the fruits of good *karma (sukṛta)*. This issue is discussed in the subsequent two *sūtras*[1] which are treated as a separate *adhikaraṇa* under the title Guhādhikaraṇa by Śaṁkara and Madhva and as part of the Attrādhikaraṇa by Rāmānuja. Though the *sūtra* itself does not mention the enjoyment of *sukṛta* by Brahman, the Upaniṣadic text to which it has reference states it in a symbolic way as drinking (*pibanti*).

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[1] *Kaṭha Up.*, I.2.24: *Yasya brahma ca kṣatram ca ubhe bhavata odanaḥ, mṛtyuḥ yasya upasecanam.*

[2] *VS*, I.2.9.

[3] *Bṛ. Up.*, III.2.5: *Sa yadyadevāsṛjata tattad-attum adhriyata sarvam vā attīti tad-aditer-adititvam.*

The concerned *sūtra* reads: *guhaṁ praviṣṭau Ātmānau hi tad-darśanāt.*[2] It means that the two who have entered into the cave are the two souls, the individual soul and the Supreme Self, because it is stated so in the Upaniṣad. The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* says: "The two of the nature of sunshine and shadow, having entered the cave, drink the fruit of *karma* (*ṛta*) in the world of good deeds."[3] According to the prima facie view, the two who drink the *ṛta* are the mind (*buddhi*) and the individual soul conditioned by it, since the act of drinking cannot be ascribed to the *Paramātman*. The Sūtrakāra, as interpreted by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, rejects this view and upholds that the word *two* refer to the individual and the Supreme Self, since both of them enter into and dwell in the heart, which is symbolically expressed as *guha* or cave. The individual soul being subjected to the law of *karma*, actually drinks the *ṛta* in the sense of reaping the benefits of good deeds. *Paramātman* is regarded as the one who drinks the *ṛta* in a figurative sense by virtue of His companionship with the drinking *jīva*. The statement can also be understood in the sense that *Paramātman* causes the *jīva* to drink the fruits of *karma,* while *jīva* actually enjoys it.

Madhva interprets the word 'two' as the two forms of Brahman known as *Ātmā* and the *Antarātmā* or the inner controller of *jīva* and not *jīva* and *Paramātman*.[4] The function of drinking referred to in the Upaniṣad, therefore, is also applicable to Brahman. That is, Brahman also, according to Madhva's interpretation, enjoys the fruits of good *karma* of *jīva* (*śubham pibati asau nityaṁ*). He strongly defends this interpretation with the support of a few scriptural and Smṛti texts.

[1] *VS*, I.2.11 & 12.

[2] *VS*, I.2.11.

[3] See *Kaṭha Up.*, I.3.1: *Ṛtam pibantau sukṛtasya loke guhāṁ praviṣṭau parame parārdhe; chāyātapau brahmavido-vadanti.*

[4] See *Bṛhatsaṁhitā* quoted by Madhva in *MSB*: *Ātmā antarātmeti harir-eka eva dvidhā sthitaḥ, niviṣṭo hṛdaye nityaṁ rasaṁ pibati karmajam.*

Whatever may be the merit of such a view from the theistic point of view adopted by Madhva, it does not appear to be sound from the philosophic point of view. Besides, in the absence of any mention in the *sūtra* that Brahman actually enjoys the fruits of good *karma* of the *jīva*, it cannot be said with certainty that Bādarāyaṇa subscribes to this view. It is therefore appropriate to assume, as Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja have explained, that the act of drinking or the enjoyment of the good deeds by *Paramātman* is to be understood in the figurative sense.

BRAHMAN AS ANTARYĀMIN OR THE INNER CONTROLLER

This is one of the essential characteristics of Brahman which is brought out explicitly in the Antaryāmyadhikaraṇa comprising three *sūtras* and also in the Upaniṣadic passage that constitutes its *viṣaya-vākya*. The relevant *sūtra* reads: *Antaryāmyadhidaiva-(adhiloka) ādiṣu tad-dharma-vyapadeśāt.*[1] The term *antaryāmī* means one who controls from within or the Inner Controller. *Adhidaivādiṣu* means the deities and other entities referred to in the Upaniṣadic statements. The word *adhiloka* added by Rāmānuja on the basis of the Mādhyandina recension of the Upaniṣad means the worlds and others. The word *taddharma vyapadeśāt* means because of the mention of the attributes of Brahman. The total meaning of the *sūtra*, as interpreted by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, is that the *antaryāmin* or the Inner Controller of the deities and other entities mentioned in the Upaniṣadic passage is Brahman because the attributes stated in the passage are applicable to Brahman.

This *sūtra* is formulated on the basis of the significant passage known as *Antaryāmī Brāhmaṇa* of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*. In an eloquent discourse by the sage Yājñavalkya addressed to Uddālaka, glorifying an *antaryāmin* as dwelling in all divine beings and entities of the universe, the passage states: "He who dwells in the earth (*pṛthivī*) and within the earth, whom the earth does not know, whose body (*śarīra*) the earth is, who controls the earth from within, He is thy Self, the controller within (*antaryāmī*), the immortal (*amṛta*) etc."[2] In the same strain the passage speaks of the *antaryāmin* in respect of other entities, viz., water (*ap*), fire (*agni*), sky (*antarikṣa*), air (*vāyu*), heaven (*divi*), sun (*āditya*), the regions (*dik*), moon and stars (*candra tāraka*), ether (*ākāśa*), darkness (*tamas*), light (*tejas*); all beings (*sarvabhūta*), breath, speech, eye, ear, mind, skin, knowledge (*vijñāna*) and semen (*retas*). In each case the statement describes that He dwells in the respective things, is within them, is not known by them, has them for its body (*śarīra*) and controls them and finally concludes with the words: "He is thy self, the Controller within, the immortal" (*eṣa ta ātmā antaryāmy-amṛtaḥ*). In Mādhyandina version of the passage, the Upaniṣad adds three additional entities, viz., all the worlds (*sarva loka*), all the Vedas, and all *yajñas*. Besides, in place of *vijñāna*, it uses the term *Ātman*. In the subsequent passage, the Inner Controller is described as *dṛṣṭā* or seer, *śrotā* or hearer, and that there is no other seer (*na anyato asti dṛṣṭā*).

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[1] *VS*, I.2.18.

[2] *Bṛ. Up.*, III.7.1: *Yaḥ pṛthivyāṁ tiṣṭhan pṛthivyā antaro yam pṛthivī na veda yasya pṛthivī śarīram yaḥ pṛthivīm antaro yamayati yeṣa ta ātmā antaryamy-amṛtaḥ.* This is the reading acc. Kāṇva recension. The Mādhyandina version adds: *Yaḥ sarveṣu lokeṣu tiṣṭhan yaḥ sarveṣu vedeṣu yaḥ sarveṣu yajñeṣu.*

Who is the *antaryāmin* referred to in each statement twenty-one times, as the one who dwells in the various entities and who controls them from within? Is it the individual Self (*jīvātman*) or the Supreme Self (*Paramātman*)? These are the two possibilities according to Rāmānuja, whereas Śaṁkara raises four alternatives, viz., the presiding deity of each element, the yogin with higher controlling power, the *Paramātman*, and something else. The *pūrvapakṣa* stated by Madhva is in favour of *prakṛti* and *abhimānī jīvas* of the concerned entities.

The Sūtrakāra rejects all the alternatives except the *Paramātman* who is affirmed as the *antaryāmin*. The reason advanced in favour of this conclusion is contained in the final words of the *sūtra*, viz., *taddharma vyapadeśāt* which mean that the *dharmas* or the attributes that are applicable to *Paramātman* are mentioned in the Upaniṣadic passage. The first important characteristic which is well brought out in the Upaniṣadic statements is that He controls all the deities, all the worlds and all the entities by virtue of his being their *antarātmā* or Indweller. Such a *dharma* cannot belong to any one else other than *Paramātman*. In addition to it the Upaniṣad speaks of Him as *amṛta* or immortal. *Amṛtatva* as a *dharma* belongs to *Paramātman*. Hence the *antaryāmin* mentioned in the Upaniṣad is Brahman only.

This conclusion is further confirmed by Bādarāyaṇa in the subsequent *sūtra* which rules out the possibility of *jīvātman* and other ontological entity such as *pradhāna* of Sāmkhya being the *antaryāmin*. The *sūtra* reads: *na ca smārtam atad-dharmābhilāpāt* *śārīraśca.*[1] The word *smārta* means what is established by Smṛti (Sāṁkhya) and as such it refers to the *pradhāna*, as interpreted by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja. The word *śarīra*, which is read as part of the *sūtra* by Rāmānuja and as part of the subsequent *sūtra* by Śaṁkara, is understood as the individual self. Both these entities cannot be regarded as *antaryāmin*, because the attributes mentioned in the Upaniṣad are not applicable to them (*atad-dharmābhilāpāt*). The *sūtra* subsequent to this which reads as *ubhaye'pi bhedenainam adhīyate,*[2] categorically states that in both the versions of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*—the Mādhyandina and Kāṇva—the *antaryāmin* dwells in the *jīvātman* and as such *Jīva* and *Paramātman* are distinct entities. Whether this *bheda* or difference between the two is real or phenomenal caused by *avidyā*, as contended by Śaṁkara, is a different issue which will be discussed separately. For the present it may be noted that the *sūtras* as worded by Bādarāyaṇa, clearly point out that the characteristic of *antaryāmitva* is attributed to Brahman which is distinct from the *jīvātman*.

Madhva offers a slightly different meaning on the *sūtra*. He connects the word *adhidaivādiṣu* in the *sūtra* with the last word *tad-dharma-vyapadeśāt* and interprets the *sūtra* to mean that Viṣṇu alone is *antaryāmī* since His characteristics are mentioned in all these entities.[3] In the same way, he explains the subsequent two *sūtras*. However the final conclusion reached does not differ from that of Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja. It may therefore be said that according to Bādarāyaṇa, Brahman is the *antaryāmin* or the Inner Controller of the entire universe.

BRAHMAN AS AKṢARA OR THE IMPERISHABLE REALITY

The Upaniṣads describe Brahman in terms of certain negative attributes in the same way as they often describe it with positive qualities. Thus states the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*:[4] "The higher knowledge is that by which the *Akṣara* or the Imperishable[5] is comprehended.

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[1] *VS*, I.2.19 & 20 acc. *SB*; I.2.20 acc. *RB*.

[2] *VS*, I.2.20 acc. *SB*; I.2.21 acc. *RB*.

[3] *MSB*, I.2.18: *Adhidaivādiṣu taddharma vyapadeśāt viṣṇureva antaryāmī.*

[4] *M. Up.*, I.1.5: *Atha parā yayā tadakṣaram adhigamyate yat tad adṛśeyam agrāhyam agotram avarṇam acakṣuḥ-śrotraṁ tad apāṇi-pādaṁ; nityaṁ vibhuṁ sarvagataṁ susūkṣmaṁ tad avyayaṁ yad bhūtayonim paripaśyanti dhīrāḥ.*

[5] Etymologically, the term *akṣara* means that which does not perish (*na kṣarati iti*) or that which pervades everything (*aśnuta iti*), see *SB*, I.3.10; see also *RB*, I.2.23.

That which is neither perceived nor grasped, which is without family and caste, without eyes and ears, without hands and feet, the eternal, all-pervading, omnipresent, exceedingly subtle, which is undecaying, which the wise regard as the source of all beings (*bhūta-yoni*)." The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* describes the *Akṣara* (Brahman) in a similar way as devoid of all physical properties and organs of living beings.[1] In two separate *adhikaraṇas* known as Adṛśyatvādhikaraṇa and Akṣarādhikaraṇa the import of these Upaniṣadic texts which constitute the *viṣaya-vākya* for the concerned *sūtras*, is fully discussed. Though the *sūtras* themselves, except one, do not mention the negative attributes, the Upaniṣadic texts do so. It is possible to construe the negation of the qualities in favour of the theory of *nirviśeṣa* Brahman. It is therefore important to understand whether Bādarāyaṇa conveys in these *sūtras* the theory of *nirviśeṣa* Brahman or in all these cases Brahman is conceived only as *saviśeṣa* or as one qualified with both negative and positive attributes.

We shall first consider the Adṛśyatvādhikaraṇa. The main *sūtra* of this *adhikaraṇa* reads: *adṛśyatvādi-guṇako dharmokteḥ.*[2] Its meaning is, as explained by both Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, that the ontological entity denoted by *akṣara* and *bhūtayoni* in the Upaniṣad which is qualified by the attributes such as invisibility (*adṛśyatva*) is Brahman, since the characteristics (*dharmas*) mentioned in the Upaniṣadic texts, viz., that He knows all (*sarvajña*) and He cognises everything (*sarvavit*) exclusively belong to *Paramātman* or Brahman.

In bringing out the fuller implications of this important *sūtra* the commentators bring up a few issues with reference to the Upaniṣadic texts. The opening statement of the passage mentions that the *akṣara* is comprehended by the higher knowledge (*parā adhigamyate*). After describing the *akṣara* in terms of negative qualities such as *adṛśyatva*, the text says: "That which is higher than *akṣara* (*akṣarāt parataḥ paraḥ*)." Later on it states: "He who knows all and cognises everything (*yas-sarvajñaḥ sarvavit*)." The first issue that arises in this connection is whether the term *akṣara* mentioned in the opening statement is the *pradhāna* of the Sāṁkhya since the negative qualities described in the Upaniṣadic text appropriately apply to it. Besides, in the later text something higher than *akṣara* is spoken and hence

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[1] *Bṛ. Up.*, III.8.8: *Sa hovāca, etadvai tad akṣaraṁ, gārgi, brāhmaṇā abhivadanti, asthūlam anaṇu ahrasvam adīrgham alohitam asneham acchāyam avarṇaṁ....*

[2] *VS*, I.2.21.

akṣara cannot possibly be the *Paramātman*. This is the prima facie view that is advanced by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja. It can also stand for the *jīvātman* both according to Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja. The Sūtrakāra, as interpreted by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, reject these views and affirms that *akṣara* referred to here is Brahman who is qualified by the negative attributes because of the fact that the *dharmas* mentioned in the concluding portion of the passage, viz., *sarvajñatva* and *sarvavittva* belong to Brahman and not either to *pradhāna* or *jīvātman*. This is the implication of the word *dharmokteḥ* in the *sūtra*.

Regarding the Upaniṣadic statement referring to a principle higher than *akṣara* (*akṣarāt paratah paraḥ*), the word *akṣara* mentioned here does not mean Brahman as the source of the universe (*bhūta-yoni*) but the primordial cosmic matter in its unmanifest form known as *bhūta-sūkṣma* for the obvious reason that there cannot be anything greater than the *akṣara* as Brahman. Both Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja are agreed on this, though they interpret this statement slightly differently.

Another controversial issue which is raised here relates to the terms *parā vidyā* and *aparā vidyā* referred to in the Upaniṣadic passage. Śaṁkara interprets *parā vidyā* as higher spiritual knowledge (*brahma vidyā*) gained by the study of the Upaniṣads, whereas *aparā vidyā* refers to the knowledge derived from the *Ṛgveda* and other sacred texts. Rāmānuja understands by *parā vidyā aparokṣa jñāna* or direct knowledge arising from unceasing meditation on Brahman (*upāsanākhyam brahma sākṣātkāra lakṣaṇam bhakti rūpāpannaṁ jñānam*) and *aparā vidyā* refers to *parokṣa jñāna* or the mediate knowledge derived from the study of the sacred texts including the Upaniṣads. Madhva offers a different explanation. According to him, the *Ṛgveda* including the Upaniṣads and other sacred texts is *parā vidyā* if it leads to the understanding of Viṣṇu, while the same is *aparā vidyā* if it is not conducive to the understanding of Viṣṇu.[1] The Sūtrakāra himself does not speak of two *vidyās* though it is mentioned in the Upaniṣad. As this issue is closely linked up with the theory of two Brahmans, we shall discuss this matter in a later chapter separately.

There are few other issues which are brought up by the commentators in this *adhikaraṇa* while interpreting the Upaniṣadic passage. These are of exegetical nature and related to the doctrinal theories of the respective Vedānta schools. We shall pass over these and confine our attention to find out the view of Bādarāyaṇa on the main point of the *sūtra*. According to Bādarāyaṇa, *akṣara* mentioned in the Upaniṣad is Brahman and it is qualified by the negative and positive attributes stated in the Upaniṣadic text (*adṛśyatvādi-guṇakaḥ*) because of the fact that it is spoken as knower of all (*sarvajña*) and cognizer of all (*sarvavit*). That this is the view of Bādarāyaṇa is confirmed by subsequent *sūtras* in which he clearly states that *pradhāna* and *jīvātman* cannot be *akṣara* since the Upaniṣad itself declares the difference between the two in terms of different characteristics they possess.[1] The explicit mention of the word *guṇakaḥ* or as one possessed with attributes rules out the possibility of *akṣara* as Brahman being undifferentiated (*nirviśeṣa*). Śaṁkara also acknowledges that the *bhūtayoni* qualified with attributes such as *adṛśyatva* is only *Parameśvara* or Supreme ruler.[2]

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[1] See Madhva's commentary on *M. Up.*: *Ṛgadi-aparā vidyā yad viṣṇoḥ na vācakaḥ; tā eva paramāvidyā yadā viṣṇostu vācakāḥ.*

Madhva offers a different interpretation of the *sūtra*, though he accepts the same text of the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* as its *viṣaya-vākya*. The *akṣara* referred to in the Upaniṣad, according to the *pūrvapakṣa*, is one of the four: *jaḍa-prakṛti*, *cetana-prakṛti*, four-faced Brahmā and Rudra. The Sūtrakāra, according to Madhva's interpretation, rejects all these views as untenable. But Madhva acknowledges three types of *akṣara*, viz., *mūla-prakṛti*, *cit-prakṛti* and *Paramātman*. According to him, the first one provides the stuff out of which the material world is formed; the second one is the Goddess Śrī, the presiding deity (*abhimāni-devatā*) of *prakṛti* and the third is *Paramātman* as the highest. These three *akṣaras* stand in an ascending order of imperishability beginning with *jaḍa-prakṛti* and ending with the Supreme Brahman. In the text *akṣarāt parataḥ paraḥ*, the *parākṣara* is Brahman which is the primary source of the universe, whereas other two *akṣaras* are material *prakṛti* and its presiding deity. Though Madhva recognizes three *akṣaras* in an ascending order, the primary import (*mukhyārtha*) of *akṣara* is Brahman to whom all the negative attributes are to be ascribed. The same is spoken as *sarvajña* and *sarvavit* in the Upaniṣad and not either *pradhāna* or *jīva* or even Rudra. The conclusion thus reached does not differ from the view of Bādarāyaṇa as we have pointed out earlier on the basis of the comments of Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja.

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[1] *VS*, I.2.22 acc. *SB*; I.2.23 acc. *RB*: *Viśeṣaṇa bheda vyapadeśābhyāṁ na itarau.*

[2] *SB*, I.2.21: *Yo adṛśyatvādi guṇaka bhūtayoniḥ parameśvara eva syāt na anyat.*

Another *adhikaraṇa* named as Akṣarādhikaraṇa discusses directly the nature of *akṣara* or the imperishable Reality. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣadic* text which constitutes the *viṣaya-vākya* for this, describes the *akṣara* in terms of certain negative concepts. It states that "it is neither gross nor fine (*anaṇu*), neither short nor long, it is neither red, nor adhesive; it is neither shadow nor darkness, neither air nor space, unattached, without taste, without smell, without eyes, without ears, without voice, without mind, without radiance, without breath, without mouth, without measure, having no within and without; it eats nothing and no one eats it." In a later statement of the same passage, it says that *akṣara* is the supporter of the entire cosmos (*dhṛti* or *ādhāra*) and it is the commanding Ruler of all (*praśāsana*). The *sūtras* highlight both these positive attributes and on this basis it is affirmed that *akṣara* is Brahman.

The relevant *sūtras* read: *akṣaram ambarānta-dhṛteḥ. sā ca praśāsanāt.*[1] The first one means that *akṣara* is Brahman because it is stated in the Upaniṣad that it is the supporter of the entire universe beginning from the gross element of earth and culminating with the subtlest unmanifested *ākāśa* (*sūkṣma-bhūta ākāśa*). The second *sūtra* means that *akṣara* is the supporter of all that exists because of its Supreme Command.

Though the meaning of the *sūtras* are fairly clear, the conflicting statements in the Upaniṣadic passage give room for doubts. The term *akṣara* also means the alphabetical letter (*varṇa*). It also stands for the *pradhāna*, the non-sentient primordial cosmic matter, and the individual self (*jīvātman*). The question is therefore raised whether *akṣara* mentioned in the *sūtra* refers to any one of these entities. According to the prima facie view, each one of these is claimed as *akṣara* with some arguments supporting it. While Śaṁkara advances all the three theories as the *pūrvapakṣa*, Rāmānuja confines it to the *pradhāna* and *jīvātman*. Madhva focuses his attention on a different *pūrvapakṣa* supporting *akṣara* as the *cetana-prakṛti*, that is, *prakṛti* presided by a sentient Being, viz., Goddess Śrī. He justifies this theory with some arguments with the support of the Smṛti texts (*Gītā* and Purāṇas).

The Sūtrakāra, as explained by the commentators, rejects all these views and upholds that *akṣara* is Brahman because of the two characteristics mentioned in the *sūtra*, viz., *ambarānta-dhṛtatva* or the capacity to sustain the entire cosmos and *praśāsanatva* or the power to rule everything completely. Both these points are elucidated in the commentaries with reference to the statements of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*. In the relevant passage covering the dialogue between Yājñavalkya and his pupil, Gārgi it is first stated that *akṣara* is the warp and woof of heaven and earth and also what fills in the space between them and whatever is said to be past, present and future. Again in reply to a further query as to what is the warp and woof of *ākāśa*, it is answered: "This *ākāśa* is in its turn woven into the *akṣara*" (*estasminnu khalu akṣare gārgi ākāśa otaśca protaśca*).[1] In the next passage, the *akṣara* is described as *asthūla, anaṇu, ahasṛvam*, etc. The *akṣara* is also extolled as the commanding ruler of the sun, moon, etc. Taking into consideration the entire passage and the manner in which *akṣara* is described as the main support of the universe both in its manifested and unmanifested form, *akṣara* stands for Brahman as that alone possesses the two important characteristics mentioned in the Upaniṣad and the *sūtras*. These *dharmas* are not applicable to either *pradhāna* or the *jīvātman*. This fact is well brought out in the Upaniṣad which describes *akṣara* as *dṛṣtā* or seer, as *śrotā* or hearer and as *vijñatṛ* or the knower and that there is no other seer or hearer than the *akṣara*. This point is mentioned by Bādarāyṇa in the subsequent *sūtra* which reads *anyabhāva vyāvṛtteśca*[2] meaning that the very Upaniṣad makes out the difference between *akṣara* and the other two entities.

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[1] *VS*, I.3.10 & 11 acc. *SB*; I.3.9 & 10 acc. *RB*.

Madhva offers a different interpretation. According to him, the implication of this *sūtra* is that *akṣara* is the Supreme Being because it alone has the unique distinction of possessing and uniting within itself an array of seemingly contradictory attributes as no where else it is to be found such attributes coexisting in the empirical world. All the contradictory attributes can coexist in Brahman because of its great mysterious power. Though there may be some point in Madhva's contention, the final conclusion reached by him does not differ from that of Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja. It can, therefore, be safely assumed that according to Bādarāyaṇa, *akṣara* taken as Brahman cannot be an undifferentiated Reality as some commentators of Śaṁkara (Bhāmatī and Kalpataru) claim for the obvious reason that *ādhāratva* and *praśāsanatva*, the two characteristics cannot be ascribed to the *nirviśeṣa* Brahman.

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[1] *Br. Up.*, III.8.6.

[2] *VS*, I.3.12 acc. *SB*; I.3.11 acc. *RB*.

BRAHMAN AS VAIŚVĀNARA OR THE RULER OF ALL SOULS

A passage in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* contains an important teaching on the meditation of Vaiśvānara which is regarded as Brahman. It commences with the narration of five sages who are desirous of knowing "What is our Self, What is Brahman" (*ko na Ātmā, kiṁ Brahma*). They first approach Uddālaka who in turn takes them to Aśvapati Kaikeya who is reputed to know it better. On meeting Kaikeya, they request him with the words: "You know at present that *Vaiśvānara* Self, tell us that" (*Ātmanamevam vaiśvānaraṁ sampratyadhyeṣi tameva no brūhi*). With a view to finding out how much the sages already knew, Kaikeya asks each one of them to tell what they have been presently meditating. In reply each one mentions that he meditates on Vaiśvānara conceived as one of these entities respectively viz., heaven (*divi*), sun (*sūrya*), air (*vāyu*), ether (*ākāśa*), and earth (*pṛthivī*). Realizing that this amounts to the meditation of Vaiśvānara as limited by a span, Kaikeya comes out with the statement: "But he who meditates on the Vaiśvānara *Ātman* measured by a span, as *abhivimāna* (as transcending all measure or as unlimited pervading the entire universe), eats the food in all worlds, in all beings, in all selves."[1] Further the Upaniṣad personifies the Vaiśvānara and describes every part of it—the head, eyes, breath, trunk, feet, chest, heart, mind, and mouth—as representing the different elements such as *tejas*, earth, etc., and the components of a sacrifice (*yāga*) such as altar, fire, etc.

Based on this passage which does not convey its import clearly, Bādarāyaṇa introduces the following *sūtra: Vaiśvānaraḥ sādhāraṇa-śabda-viśeṣāt.*[2] The word *vaiśvānaraḥ* means, as interpreted by all the commentators, Brahman. The reason for regarding it as Brahman is contained in the next word of the *sūtra, sādhāraṇa śabdaviśeṣāt.* Its general meaning is that the common word is qualified by distinction. This needs some elucidation and it is in this connection, the commentators offer different explanations with reference to the Upaniṣadic and other scriptural texts.

The term Vaiśvānara is a common word because it applies to more than one thing. So also is the word *Ātmā*, according to Śaṁkara. The latter may mean either *jīvātman* or *Paramātman.* The former can mean either the digestive fire (*jaṭharāgni*), or the elemental fire (*bhūtāgni*) or its presiding deity (*tadabhimāni-devatā*), since we come across scriptural texts using them in these senses. It may also refer to the *jīvātman* or the individual self since the word *Ātmā* mentioned in the Upaniṣad is applicable to it. Finally, it can denote *Paramātman.* The question, therefore, arises as to which one of these the term *vaiśvānara* used in the Upaniṣad refers. Śaṁkara advances as prima facie view all the first four theories. Rāmānuja leaves out of the scope of *pūrvapakṣa* the *jīvātman* since the word *Ātmā* used in this passage bears the primary import in respect of *Paramātmā.* Madhva confines to two views only as the *pūrvapakṣa,* viz., the elemental fire (*bhūtāgni*) and the deity presiding over it (*agni-devatā*).

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[1] See *Ch. Up.*, V.18.1: *Yastvetamevaṁ prādeśamātram abhivimanam Ātmānaṁ vaiśvānaram upāste sa sarveṣu lokeṣu sarveṣu bhūteṣu sarveṣu Ātmasu annam atti....*

[2] *VS*, I.2.24 acc. *SB*; I.2.5 acc. *RB*.

The Sūtrakāra, as interpreted by all the commentators, rejects all these views and affirms that the term Vaiśvānara denotes Brahman only because this common word is qualified by certain distinguishing marks which are appilcable to Brahman.

How is that the common word (*sāmānya-śabda*) becomes the distinguished one (*viśeṣa*)? In reply to it, each commentator offers a different explanation. According to Śaṁkara, the *Chāndogya* passage refers to the Vaiśvānara as *Paramātman* since he is distinguished as having heaven for his head etc., in so far as He has assumed a different state (*avasthāntara*) or the state of being the Self of the threefold world and in that state, He serves as the object of meditation as the individual Self of all. As Brahman is the cause of the universe, it is possible that its effects in the form of heaven, earth, etc., represent its parts. Further the fruit of the meditation on Vaiśvānara is described in the words such as "He eats the food in all the worlds, in all the beings, in all the souls, etc." This indicates that Vaiśvānara is *Paramātman.* Besides, the Upaniṣad points out that the person who obtains the knowledge of Vaiśvānara becomes free from all sins (*evam hāsya sarve pāpmānaḥ pradūyante*).[1]

Rāmānuja offers a straightforward explanation. According to him the *sāmānya-śabda* becomes qualified by distinguished attributes (*asādhāraṇa dharmaiḥ*) which are only applicable to Brahman, Taking the entire passage into consideration, it commences with an enquiry by the five sages about Brahman and the person who teaches it and is reputed to have that knowledge. Both the subject of enquiry and the contents of the teaching by Kaikeya is related to Brahman. The terms *Ātmā* and *Brahma* used in the opening statement are replaced later on in the passage by the words *Ātmā* and Vaiśvānara. The term *vaiśvānara* which replaces Brahman denotes that it is none other than *Paramātman*. Besides, the fruit of the meditation as described in the later part of the Upaniṣad and also the fact that the knower of Vaiśvānara becomes free from all sins clearly confirm that the term Vaiśvānara denotes Brahman.

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[1] See *Ch. Up.*, V.24.3.

Madhva interprets the word *viśeṣāt* to mean that the term *vaiśvānara* is qualified by the epithet *Ātmā* which in its fullest primary sense denotes Viṣṇu or Brahman (*vaiśvānara śabdasya Ātma śabdena viśeṣaṇāt*).[1]

We need not go into the merits of these interpretations since our main concern is to find out the view of Bādarāyaṇa on the subject. The *sūtra* as it is worded points out that Vaiśvānara is Brahman. That this is the view of Bādarāyaṇa becomes confirmed in the subsequent eight *sūtras* of this *adhikaraṇa* in which he raises some possible objections against this conclusion and answers them. In this connection, he even mentions the views of the other sages such as Jaimini, Āśmarathya and Bādari. The explanations offered on them by the commentators are of exegetical nature and we may pass over them. However, the view of Jaimini is worth noting. Jaimini is of the opinion that there is no objection in taking the term *vaiśvānara* to denote Brahman directly (*sākṣādapi avirodham jaiminiḥ*).[2] This appears to be acceptable to Bādarāyaṇa. Etymologically, the term implies *Paramātman* or Brahman. According to the grammatical rule, the word *vaiśvānara* is formed out of *viśvanara*. It therefore means, as Rāmānuja explains, one who is the Ruler (*netā*) of all the human beings or souls (*viśveṣām narāṇām netāra*). It can also mean, as Śaṁkara states, the one who is the soul of all (*viśveṣām ayam naraḥ*). The important point to be noted is that Brahman conceived as *vaiśvānara* implies an important characteristic of *Rulership of all souls*.

BRAHMAN AS ĀYATANA OR THE ABODE OF HEAVEN AND EARTH

This is an important characteristic of Brahman which is explicitly mentioned in the *sūtra* itself. The *adhikaraṇa* on this subject comprising seven *sūtras* takes up for discussion a significant passage of

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[1] See *MB*, I.2.24.

[2] *VS*, I.2.28 acc. to *SB*; I.2.29 acc. to *RB*.

Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad. The relevant text of the Upaniṣad which constitutes the *viṣaya-vākya* says: "He in whom the heaven, earth and the sky along with the mind and the vital breath (*prāṇa*) are woven; know Him alone as the *Ātman* and abandon all other talk. He is the bridge (*setu*) to the immortality (*amṛtasya eṣa setuḥ*)."[1]

Based on this, Bādarāyaṇa formulates the *sūtra* which reads: *dyubhvādyāyatanaṁ svaśabdāt.*[2] The word *āyatana* means the abode or that which holds together. The compound word *dyu-bhuvau* (*dvyauśca bhūśca dyubhuvau*) refers to the heaven and earth and the suffix *ādi* implies other entities such as sky (*antarikṣa*), mind (*manas*) and vital breath (*prāṇa*) stated in the Upaniṣadic text. The total meaning of the first part of the *sūtra* is that the abode of the heaven, earth and so on is Brahman. The next part of the *sūtra* containing the word *sva-śabdāt* means that the very term *Ātman* that is applicable to Brahman is specifically mentioned in the Upaniṣad. By way of explaining the fuller implication of the *sūtra* with reference to the Upaniṣadic texts, the commentators have raised other issues.

The question is raised with reference to the opening statement of the Upaniṣad whether any other ontological entity could be the abode of the heaven, earth, etc., Śaṁkara mentions three possible alternatives other than Brahman. These are: (1) The *pradhāna* of Sāṁkhya which is the general cause of the universe. (2) The *vāyu* or air which is extolled in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* as that which holds the universe. (3) The *jīvātman* which being the enjoyer (*bhoktā*) is an abode with reference to the objects of fruition. Madhva adds Rudra to these three on the basis of the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka.* Rāmānuja confines to the two alternatives on the basis of the present passage of the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad.* It is either *jīvātman* which can be the abode as the supporter of the *nāḍis* in the body or the *Paramātman.* The prima facie view is developed on the basis of each one of the alternatives except *Paramātman* with some supporting arguments.

The Sūtrakāra, as interpreted by the commentators, rejects all these views and affirms that Brahman is *āyatana* on the authority of the statement in the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad.* The main statement is: "Know Him alone as the *Ātman* and abandon all other talk. He is the *setu* to immortality." The implication of this is that one should know that which is described as *āyatana* of the heaven, earth and other entities as *Ātman* (Brahman) and none else, because He is the *setu* to the immortality.

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[1] *M. Up.*, II.2.5: *Yasmin dyauḥ pṛthivī ca antarikṣam otaṁ manaḥ saha prāṇaiśca sarvaiḥ; tamevaikaṁ jānatha ātmānam anyo vāco vimuñcata amṛtasya eṣa setuḥ.*

[2] *VS*, I.3.1.

The terms *setu* and *Ātman* which have given room for doubts are to be understood properly. The word *setu* ordinarily means a bridge or causeway to reach the other side of a river and if it is taken in this sense Brahman cannot be the *setu* as there is nothing other than Brahman to reach. Śaṁkara, therefore, explains that this term is derived from the root *si* which means that which holds together or supports (*sinoti badhanāti iti setuḥ*). Brahman is *setu* since it serves as a means for attaining immortality in the sense that knowledge of Brahman leads to immortality. Rāmānuja takes it in the sense of *prāpaka* or the one who enables the person to attain immortality (*setuḥ amṛtasya prāpakaḥ*). It can also be understood to mean that which leads towards immortality that lies beyond the ocean of *saṁsāra* or bondage in the same way as a bridge leads to the other side of the river bank (*saṁsārārṇava-pārabhūtasya amṛtasya eṣa pratilambakaḥ ityarthaḥ*). The term *Ātman* used in the text is applicable to Brahman in the present context. As explained by Rāmānuja, the term etymologically means that which pervades everything (*āpnoti iti Ātmā*) and in its primary sense it applies to Brahman. For Madhva also the primary import of *Ātman* is Brahman. Further the description of *Ātman* as the omniscient (*sarvajña*) and knower of all (*sarvavit*) in the later part of the same Upaniṣadic passage supports this view. The characteristic of *āyatanatva*, therefeore, belongs to Brahman only.

The above conclusion is further affirmed by Bādarāyaṇa himself with additional arguments furnished in the subsequent *sūtras* of this *adhikaraṇa*.[1] Firstly, the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* itself states that the released soul attains the Being described as the *āyatana* for the heaven, earth, etc. (*mukta-upasṛpya vyapadeśāt*). Secondly, the passage under consideration does not mention anywhere *pradhāna* which is established by means of inference (*nānumānam atat śabdāt*). For the same reason the individual self cannot be regarded as the *āyatana* (*prāṇabhṛcca*). Besides, as Śaṁkara points out, the *jīvātman* is not omniscient and it is limited by adjuncts. Fourthly, the text of the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* speaks of difference between Brahman and *jīva* (*bheda-vyapadeśāt*). Fifthly, the subject-matter of the entire passage is related to Brahman only (*prakaraṇāt*). Finally, the statement of the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*[1] explicitly describes *Īśvara* and the individual self with two different characteristics—one abiding as the passive observer and the other as eating or enjoying the fruits of *karma,* though both reside in the same place (*sthityadanābhyāṁ*). In view of all these explanations it is obvious that no other entity other than Brahman can be the *āyatana* of the heaven, earth, etc.

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[1] *VS*, I.3.2-6 acc. *RB*; I.3.2-7 acc. *SB*.

Though the import of these *sūtras* is fairly clear, Śaṁkara in his comment brings up two important issues:

1. That Brahman described as *āyatana* is to be regarded as *para* or higher;
2. That the difference betwen Brahman and *jīva* is not real but caused by the *upādhi* or limiting adjuncts. He seeks to justify his view on the basis of the Upaniṣadic text which reads: "Know Him only as *Ātman* and abandon all other talk." The implication of this, according to Śaṁkara, is that the heaven, earth, sky, mind, and vital breath which are woven in Brahman are falsely superimposed on Brahman due to *avidyā* and that we have to know *Ātman* (Brahman) alone as the substratum of all these illusory appearances. Brahman does not intrinsically contain the plurality within itself in the sense of being one in and through its many as a tree is one in and through its integral parts, the root, trunk, branches, etc. The many is instrumental to know the one and when once the one Reality is realized, the plurality vanishes. This is what is implied by saying that all other talk is to be avoided. This is illustrated by an analogy. If one were asked to fetch the seat that Devadatta had occupied, only the seat is brought and not Devadatta along with it.[2] The difference between Brahman and *jīva* to which the Sūtrakāra makes a pointed reference, is explained by Śaṁkara on the basis of subject-object relationship (*jñeya-jñatṛbhāva*) in which the individual self and Brahman have been made to stand to each other in the statement *tam evaikam jānatha ātmānam.* This is purely a differentiating factor and not actual difference betwen the two real entities. *Jīva* is Brahman conditioned by *upādhi* and when once the *upādhi* is removed it becomes one with Brahman.

[1] *M. Up.*, III.1.1: *Dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāya samānaṁ vṛkṣaṁ pariṣasvajāte tayor-anyaḥ pippalam sāvadvatti anaśnan anyo abhicākaśīti....*

[2] *SB*, I.3.1.

These are all exegetical details based on the metaphysical doctrine adopted by Śaṁkara. We shall discuss the validity of these arguments at the appropriate place. We are primarily concerned with the view of Bādarāyaṇa. The relevant *sūtras* as they are worded do not convey these ideas even implicitly. Bādarāyaṇa categorically states that Brahman is *āyatana* of the heaven, earth, etc. which actually exists, and that *jīva* is different from it in the real sense of the term. An undifferentiated higher Brahman as conceived by Śaṁkara is not intended to serve as *āyatana* or abode for the heaven etc., since all these are contained within undifferentiated higher Brahman.

BRAHMAN AS BHŪMĀ OR THE INFINITELY GREAT

The Bhūmādhikaraṇa comprising two *sūtras* brings out an important characteristic of Brahman. Based on a significant passage of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad,* the *sūtra* describes Brahman as *Bhūmā* or the immensely great. It reads: *bhūmā saṁprasādādadhyupadeśāt.*[1] What is the meaning of the term *bhūmā*? The relevant Upaniṣadic text which constitutes the subject-matter (*viṣaya-vākya*) for this *sūtra* describes it in the following words: "Where one sees nothing else, hears nothing else, knows nothing else, that is immensely great (*bhūmā*); where one sees something else, hears something else, knows something else, that is small or trivial (*alpa*)."[2] In the preceding text of this Upaniṣad, it states: "He who is great is indeed bliss" (*yo vai bhūmā tat sukham*).

The term *bhūmā* is derived from the root word *bahu* (immense), but with the addition of the suffix *imnic,* it becomes *bhūmā*. It, therefore, literally means *bahutva* or immensity in terms of quality and not quantity, as contrasted to *alpatva* or smallness. As a quality it should inhere in a substance or entity. What is that entity which is characterised by *bahutva*? According to the Sūtrakāra, as agreed by all the commentators, *bhūmā* refers to Brahman. The reason for regarding *Bhūman* as Brahman is given in the next compound word of the *sūtra,* viz., *saṁprasādāt adhyupadeśāt.* This word is interpreted differently by the commentators. According to Śaṁkara, the term *saṁprasāda* denotes *prāṇa* or vital breath. Though it literally means the state of serenity or deep sleep (*suṣupti*), it is taken as *prāṇa* since it is awake in that state. According to Rāmānuja, the term *saṁprasāda* means *jīvātman* since the same *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* uses it as synonymous with *jīva.*[1] Madhva takes the word in the sense of perfect bliss (*pūrṇa-sukha rūpa*).

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[1] *VS,* I.3.7 acc. *RB*; I.3.8 acc. *SB* and *MSB.*

[2] See *infra,* p. 48, n.1.

Regarding the word *adhyupadeśāt,* Śaṁkara interprets that the teaching about *bhūmā* in the Upaniṣad is additional to that of *prāṇa* (*prāṇāt-ūrdhvam bhūmnā upadiśyamānatvāt*)—that is, the teaching about *bhūman* comes subsequent to that of *prāṇa.* According to Rāmānuja, this word means that *bhūman* which is identified with *satya* or Brahman is taught in addition to the *jīvātman* which is termed as *prāṇa* (*pratyagātmanaḥ adhikatayā bhūmaviśiṣṭasya satya śabdābhidheyasya upadeśāt ityarthaḥ*). Madhva offers a different interpretation. According to him, the *sūtra* adduces two reasons and not one only as Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja understand it. The two reasons are contained in the words of the *sūtra,* viz., *saṁprasādāt* and *adhyupadeśāt. Saṁprasādāt* means because it (*bhūmā*) is infinite bliss (*pūrṇa-sukha-rūpa*).[2] *Adhyupadeśāt* means because of the scriptural teaching about the all-transcending glory of Brahman (*adhiśabdo īśvaravācī; tathā ca viśeṣa anukteḥ akhileśatvam eva uktam bhavati*). This is the general meaning of the *sūtra* according to the commentators.

The fuller implication of the *sūtra* needs to be understood with reference to the entire passage of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad.* This passage covers an interesting dialogue between Sanatkumāra and his pupil, Nārada. It commences with the request made by Nārada to teach him *Ātmā-vidyā* which is the means to overcome bondage. To facilitate the realization of *Ātman,* Sanatkumāra sets forth the meditation on a series of entities in an ascending order beginning with name (*nāma*), followed with speech (*vāk*), mind, will (*saṅkalpa*), *citta* (mental state), *dhyāna, vijñāna, bala, anna* (food), water, *tejas, ākāśa, smaraṇa* (recollection), *āśā* (desire) and ending with *prāṇa* (vital breath). After hearing that each one of these being extolled as a worthy object of meditation and as greater than the preceding entity for meditation, a query is made by Nārada in respect of each case whether there is anything greater than the previous one. When it comes to the meditation on *prāṇa,* no further query is made by

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[1] See *Ch. Up.*, VII.23 and 24: *Yatra nānyat paśyati nānyat śruṇoti nānyat vijānati sa bhūmā; atha yatra anyat paśyati anyat vijānāti tad alpam.*

[2] See *Nyāyasudhā*, I.3.8: *Prasīdatyanena hi prasādaḥ sukham; saṁyak prasādaḥ saṁprasādaḥ.*

Nārada and no other principle is also suggested by Sanatkumāra as superior to it. However, the discourse continues on a different theme relating to *satya* or Reality which is extolled with the words: "He who speaks about *satya* surpasses everything else (*ativādī*)." In this dialogue which culminates with *prāṇa* and in which no further query from Nārada is made regarding anything higher than *prāṇa* and also that no categorical statement is made by Sanatkumāra to the effect that *satya* is higher than *prāṇa*, a doubt is created whether *prāṇa* itself is *bhūman*. Accordingly, a prima facie view is advanced supporting *prāṇa* as *bhūmā* with sufficient justification.

The Sūtrakāra, as interpreted by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, rejects this view and affirms that *bhūmā* is not *prāṇa* but it is Brahman. The reason given is that after culminating the teaching with *prāṇa*, the Upaniṣadic passage proceeds to extoll *satya* in the words: "He who speaks *satya* is the true *ativādin* or the one who surpasses everything else. Further, *bhūmā* is identified with *satya* or Reality. *Satya* denotes Brahman and on this basis it is concluded that *Bhūman* is Brahman and not either *jīvātman* or *prāṇa*. Besides *Bhūman* is also described as bliss (*sukha*). This implies that Brahman is essentially of the nature of infinite bliss (*niratiśaya sukha rūpa*).

The *Bhāṣyas* on this *sūtra* contain many other details which are mostly of exegetical nature relating to the Upaniṣadic statements which teach the ways and means of meditation on *Bhūman*, the results or fruits achieved by it and other allied matters. We may pass over these details and confine our attention to the one main issue, viz., whether the term *bhūmā* as described in the Upaniṣad implies an undifferentiated Brahman (*nirviśeṣa*) or whether it refers to Brahman as qualified with *bhūmatva* or infinite greatness. The Upaniṣadic description of *bhūmā* as that where one sees nothing else, where one hears nothing else, where one knows nothing else, is interpreted by Śaṁkara as the absence of cognitive activities such as seeing and so on (*darśanādi-vyavahārābhāva*), which implies the transcendental character of Brahman (*vyavahārātīta*).[1] In support of this interpretation Śaṁkara quotes the text of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* which states: "When all this is Self only, how should one see another."[2] This would imply, according to Śaṁkara, that other than Brahman nothing else exists. *Bhūmā* is such a Brahman which is devoid of all characteristics (*nirviśeṣa*).

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[1] See *SB*, I.3.8.

[2] See *Bṛ. Up.*, IV.5.15: *Yatra tu asya sarvam ātmaivābhūt tat kena kaṁ paśyet.*

According to Rāmānuja, this Upaniṣadic text offers a definition of Brahman (*niratiśaya-vipularūpasya brahmaṇaḥ lakṣaṇamidam*).[1] The implication of the Upaniṣadic statement is: When the meditating devotee realizes Brahman which is essentially infinite bliss, he does not see anything apart from it, since everything that exists is contained within the *svarūpa* and *vibhūti* or the glorious manifestation of Brahman. He who experiences Brahman along with its all-inclusive *vibhūti* which is of the nature of bliss, all that is seen by the individual is nothing but blissful and he does not see any suffering (*anavadhikātiśaya sukharūpam brahmānubhavan tato anyat kimapi na paśyati duḥkhaṁ ca na paśyati*). Rāmānuja, therefore, means by *Bhūman* Brahman as qualified by *bhūmāguṇa* or the infinite greatness or infinite bliss, Madhva also takes it, as already explained, infinite bliss or *pūrṇa-ānanda.*

We need not enter into the discussion of the relative merits of these interpretations. What is important for us is to take note of Bādarāyaṇa's view on the subject. Though the main *sūtra* does not explicitly offer an answer to the issue raised by Śaṁkara, the subsequent *sūtra* of this *adhikaraṇa* speaks out the mind of Bādarāyaṇa. The *sūtra* reads: *dharmopapatteśca,* which means on account of the appropriateness of the attributes that are mentioned in this passage. The attributes which are ascribed to the *Bhūman* in this passage are: "It is bliss. It is immortality. It is Reality. It is omniscient. It is the Self of all." These are all *dharmas* or attributes and they do not constitute the *svarūpa* or essence of *Bhūman.* Bādarāyaṇa himself uses the expression *dharma.* Śaṁkara also, in his comment on this *sūtra,* states that the *dharmas* such as *satyatva, sva-mahimapratiṣṭitatva, sarvagatatva, sarvātmatva* mentioned in the Upaniṣad are applicable to *Paramātman* only (*ete dharmāḥ śrūya-māṇāḥ paramātmānyeva upapadyante nānyatra*).[2] In view of these facts, it is the view of Bādarāyaṇa that *Bhūman* is Brahman qualified with *bhūmā-guṇa* (*bhūmā-guṇa viśiṣṭa Brahma*), as Rāmānuja points out. It is an important characteristic of Brahman implying that it is infinitely great.

BRAHMAN AS DAHARĀKĀŚA OR THE SUBTLE SPACE

The Daharādhikaraṇa comprising a group of *sūtras* brings out prominently a few important attributes of Brahman. The concerned

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[1] See *RB,* I.3.7.

[2] See *SB,* I.3.9.

sūtras themselves do not directly mention them but the same are presented through the discussion of a significant passage of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* dealing with the meditation on Brahman conceived as the subtle space (*daharākāśa*) within one's heart along with a few important attributes.

The main cryptic *sūtra* reads: *dahara uttarebhyaḥ.*[1] The word *dahara* or *dahara ākāśa* as it is termed, means the subtle space which denotes the very Brahman, according to the explanation of Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja. Madhva takes the word *dahara* as *dahare* which means that which exists inside the subtle space is Brahman. The word *uttarebhyaḥ* means on account of the reasons provided in the later statements of the Upaniṣad. As agreed by all the commentators, the *sūtra* refers directly to the statement in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* which constitutes the *viṣaya-vākya* for it. It says: "Now there is in this city of Brahman the small lotus as an abode; inside it is the small space (*daharo'smin antara ākāśaḥ*); what lies within it is to be sought and understood."[2] This is a significant statement couched in a symbolic language and its implication needs to be understood with the help of the explanation provided by the commentators. The physical body of the human being is called *brahmapura* or the city of Brahman because it is chosen by Brahman as a residence to enable an *upāsaka* to meditate on it. The human heart is regarded as its mansion, *brahma-veśma* which is figuratively described as the lotus-like abode (*puṇḍarīkam veśma*). Within the heart of the body, there is a small or subtle space known as *dahara ākāśa*. It is this *daharākāśa* along with what it contains within it (*tasmin yadantaḥ*) that is to be sought and meditated. In other words, the Upaniṣadic text enjoins meditation on the *daharākāśa* or the subtle space within the heart of one's body along with the attributes it possesses (*tadantaravarti guṇajātam*).

What is this *daharākāśa* which is to be meditated? There are three possible views. It can be the physical space (*bhūtākāśa*), since the word *ākāśa* is commonly understood in that sense. It can also be the *jīvātman*, since it is present in the heart. It can also be the *Paramātman.* The first two views are advanced as the prima facie theories with some supporting arguments. The Sūtrakāra as interpreted by all the commentators, rejects both the views as untenable and affirms that *daharākāśa* referred to as the object of meditation is *Paramātman* or Brahman.[1]

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[1] *VS*, I.3.14 acc. *SB*; I.3.13 acc. *RB*.

[2] *Ch. Up.*, VII.1.1: *Atha yad-idam asmin brahmapure daharaṁ puṇḍārikaṁ veśma daharo'smin antarākāśaḥ tasmin yadantaḥ tad-anveṣṭavyaṁ tad-vāva vijijñāsitavyam.*

The above conclusion is drawn on the basis of the reasons provided in the subsequent statements of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad.* This is what is meant by the word in the *sūtra, uttarebhyaḥ* (*uttarebhyo vākya gatebhyo hetubhyaḥ*). Two important points are brought up in support of this conclusion by a methodical analysis of the Upaniṣadic texts. The first point is that this *ākāśa* within the heart is of the same magnitude and excellence as the *ākāśa* outside and that within it, the heaven and the earth, the *agni* and the *vāyu,* the sun and the moon, the stars and the lightning are contained.[2] Such a description cannot be applicable to the *bhūtākāśa.* The second significant point is that the Upaniṣad speaks of it as the *Ātman* which is stated to be free from evil, old age, death, grief, hunger, and thirst, whose needs are self-fulfilled (*satyakāma*) and one whose desires are not obstructed (*satyasaṅkalpa*).[3] The attribution of these eight *guṇas* to *ākāśa* holds good in respect of *Paramātman.* Further, as *Rāmānuja Bhāṣya* points out, the knower of *daharākāśa* becomes *satyasaṅkalpa* or one who can achieve whatever is desired and this indicates that *daharākāśa* is Brahman.

Apart from the scriptural support, Bādarāyaṇa mentions in a subsequent *sūtra* the greatness of *daharākāśa* in terms of its capacity to support the entire universe. The *sūtra* reads: *dhṛteśca mahimno asya asmin upalabdheḥ.*[4] This is based on the Upaniṣadic texts which explicitly state that this *Ātman* is *setu* or as one who holds all the worlds in their respective places.[5]

In a subsequent passage of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* all the attributes mentioned in respect of *daharākāśa* as Brahman, are also ascribed to the *jīva* after it is liberated from bondage. This gives room for the doubt whether the *daharākāśa* mentioned in the earlier part of the passage with all perfection could be Brahman. The Sūtrakāra himself raises this doubt and offers an appropriate answer. The concerned *sūtra* reads: *uttarāt cet āvirbhūta svarūpastu.*[6]

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[1] *SB,* I.3.14: *Parameśvara eva atra daharākāśo bhavitum arhati na bhūtākāśo jīvo vā.*

[2] See *Ch. Up.*, VIII.1.1-3.

[3] Ibid., VIII.7.3: *Eṣa ātmā apahata pāpma vijaro vimṛtyuḥ viśoko...satyakamaḥ satyasaṅkalpaḥ.*

[4] *VS,* I.3.16 acc. *SB;* I.3.15 acc. *RB.*

[5] See *Ch. Up.*, VIII.4.1: *Atha ya ātmā sa setuḥ vidhṛtiḥ eṣāṁ lokānām asaṁbhedāya.*

[6] *VS,* I.3.19 acc. *SB;* I.3.18 acc. *RB.*

It means that if it be said that from the subsequent passage *jīva* is meant, it is intended to convey the fact that the *jīva* manifests itself with all these attributes, after it is liberated from bondage and attains Brahman. This is the interpretation offered by Rāmānuja. According to Madhva, the manifestation of these attributes is on account of the grace of God. Śaṁkara interprets it to mean that what is said earlier is in respect of Brahman which is mistakenly regarded as the *jīva*, whereas what is stated later is *jīva* in its true nature, viz., Brahman as free from all adjuncts. This view is based on the assumption that *jīva* and Brahman are identical. Rāmānuja and Madhva for whom *jīva* and Brahman are two distinct realities have interpreted the *sūtra* differently. As this is a matter related to the issue of the difference betweeen *jīva* and Brahman, we shall discuss this separately in the appropriate chapter. The point to be taken note of presently is that according to Bādarāyaṇa, Brahman conceived as *daharākāśa* possesses the attributes such as freedom from sin (*apahata-pāpma*), agelessness, immortality, unfailing power (*satyakāmatva*) and also the capacity to sustain the entire universe in its place. There is no dispute regarding this point. Such a Brahman is obviously *saviśeṣa* and not *nirviśeṣa*.

Chapter 4

The Theory of Two Brahmans

We have discussed in the preceding chapters the nature of Brahman and its attributes as outlined in the selected *adhikaraṇas* of the first three *pādas* of the opening *adhyāya* of the *Vedāntasūtra.* We have observed that most of these *sūtras* describe Brahman in terms of certain distinguishing characteristics such as *jagatkāraṇa, ānandamaya, antaryāmī, adṛśya, āyatana, akṣara, bhūmā,* etc. The Upaniṣadic texts which constitute the *viṣaya-vākya* for these *sūtras,* explicitly bring out several other attributes or *dharmas* such as *sarvajñatva, sarvaśaktitva, sarvātmakatva, apahatapāpmatva, satyakāmatva, satyasaṅkalpatva,* etc. Though it looks obvious that according to Bādarāyaṇa, Brahman as the primary cause of the universe is qualified with attributes, Śaṁkara while commenting on some of the *sūtras,* brings up a controversial issue relating to the nature of Brahman. He advances the theory of two Brahmans, viz., *para* or higher and *apara* or lower. The former is the transcendental Ultimate Reality devoid of all characteristics, termed as *nirviśeṣa* or *nirguṇa* and the latter is the same Reality which being conditioned by the limiting adjuncts caused by *avidyā* is conceived as characterized with attributes and is termed as *saviśeṣa* or *saguṇa.*[1] The *dharmas* mentioned in the *sūtras* and the Upaniṣads are not, therefore, applicable to the higher Brahman which is absolute Reality (*sat*), pure Knowledge (*cit* or *jñāna*) and Bliss (*ānanda*). All the dharmas are, therefore, ascribed to the lower Brahman which is regarded as the God of Religion (*Īśvara*). Rāmānuja and Madhva do not accept the theory of two Brahmans. According to them there is only one Brahman which is endowed with numerous attributes (*saviśeṣa*) and which is both the metaphysical Ultimate Reality and God. This subject has, therefore, assumed a controversial character and has engaged the attention of all the Vedāntins of different schools. It is therefore important for us to know whether Bādarāyaṇa subscribes to the theory of two Brahmans and whether any of the *sūtras* either explicitly or even implicitly support the theory of higher Brahman as distinct from the lower Brahman. The present chapter is devoted to the discussion of this important issue.

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[1] The other terms used by Śaṁkara to describe the two conceptions of Brahman are *nirvikalpaka* and *savikalpaka, nirdharmaka* and *saddharmaka.* See *VS,* I.1.12; II.1.4; III.2.11, 21.

As we have already indicated, the selected *adhikaraṇas* of the first *adhyāya* generally describe Brahman as *saviśeṣa* and they do not make any mention of *nirviśeṣa* Brahman. However, there are two *adhikaraṇas* included in the third *adhyāya* related to the discussion of the nature of Brahman which are claimed by Śaṁkara to favour his theory of *nirviśeṣa* Brahman. These are titled as Ubhayaliṅgādhikaraṇa and Prakṛtaitāvattvādhikaraṇa covering a group of *sūtras*.[1] In *Rāmānuja Bhāṣya,* these are named as Ubhayaliṅgādhikaraṇa and Āhikuṇḍalādhikaraṇa.[2] Both Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja have accorded the greatest importance to these two topics for entirely two different reasons. Śaṁkara finds in these *sūtras* a full support for this theory of two Brahmans. For Rāmānuja, these *sūtras* reveal without any shadow of doubt only one Brahman as having twofold nature, viz., Brahman as endowed with numerous attributes and also as free from all defects (*nirdoṣatva* and *kalyāṇaguṇātmakatva*).

DESCRIPTION OF BRAHMAN AS UBHAYALIṄGA

The main *sūtra* of the Ubhayaliṅgādhikaraṇa reads: *na sthānato'pi parasya ubhayaliṅgam sarvatra hi.*[3] This *sūtra,* no doubt, refers to the nature of Brahman as is evident from the word *para,* a term that distinguishes it from the individual self which is discussed in the earlier sections. The word *sthānataḥ* means, on account of its immanence in the souls and other things in the universe. The word *ubhayaliṅga,* as commonly understood, means twofold nature. According to Śaṁkara, it refers to the two modes of description or two forms of Brahman, viz., Brahman as devoid of all characteristics (*nirviśeṣa-liṅga*) and Brahman as qualified with characteristics (*saviśeṣa-liṅga*). Rāmānuja means by *ubhayaliṅga* the twofold character of Brahman (*ubhayalakṣaṇam*), viz., Brahman as totally free from all defilements (*nirdoṣatva*) and Brahman as endowed with numerous auspicious qualities (*kalyāṇa-guṇātmakatva*).

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[1] *VS,* III.2.11-21 and III.2.22-30.

[2] *RB,* III.2.11-25 and III.2.26-29. Madhva has grouped these *sūtras* under eight different *adhikaraṇas* dealing with different subjects.

[3] *VS,* III.2.11.

Madhva offers a different meaning which will be discussed later. By way of elucidating the term *ubhayaliṅgam*, Śaṁkara points out that the Upaniṣads describe Brahman in two ways. Some texts speak of Brahman as *sarvakarma, sarvakāmah, sarvagandhaḥ, sarvarasaḥ*. This description is regarded by Śaṁkara as *saviśeṣa-liṅga* or Brahman as possessing characteristics. On the contrary, some texts state that Brahman is not gross, not minute, not short, not long, etc. (*asthūlaṁ anaṇu, ahrasva, adhīrgha*). This is regarded as *nirviśeṣa-liṅga* or Brahman as devoid of any determinate characteristic. Śaṁkara poses the question whether Brahman is to be taken as possessing two forms or only one of it. It cannot be both because of the mutual opposition (*na tāvat svataḥ parasya ubhayaliṅgatvam upapadyate virodhāt*). It may be possible to admit it on the basis of the association of Brahman with the limiting adjuncts (*sthānataḥ*). Even this is untenable, contends Śaṁkara. The two words in the *sūtra, ena sthānataḥ*, convey the denial of such a possibility. Even as a consequence of the association with the limiting adjuncts (*upādhi-yoga*), an object cannot possess a different character, as in the case of a white crystal which cannot become red because of its association with red flower. We are, therefore, required to take Brahman as possessing either of the two forms (*anyatara-liṅga*). If such an alternative is to be accepted, Brahman is to be conceived, says Śaṁkara, only as *nirvikalpaka* or being devoid of all characteristics (*samasta-viśeṣa-rahitaṁ nirvikalpakameva brahma pratipattavyam*).[1] The reason adduced in favour of this conclusion is that everywhere in the Upaniṣadic texts Brahman is described as *nirviśeṣa*. This is the meaning of the words in the *sūtra, sarvatra hi*. Thus says the *Kaṭhopanisad: aśabdam asparṣam arūpam avyayam*.[2] He quotes in his comment on the subsequent *sūtra* a few other similar Upaniṣadic texts describing Brahman in negative terms.

Rāmānuja interprets the *sūtra* by faithfully adhering to the words of the *sūtra* and also by taking into consideration the proper context in which it appears. Regarding the context, it is pointed out that the *adhikaraṇas* of the preceding *pāda* present the condition of the *jīva* in the states of dream, deep sleep and swoon for the purpose of developing non-attachment (*vairāgya*) by the seeker of *mokṣa*. In this connection the Sūtrakāra introduces this *sūtra* in order to promote an ardent craving for the attainment of Brahman by emphasizing the fact that Brahman, unlike *jīva*, is free from all imperfections and also endowed with auspicious attributes so that it is worthy of aspiring as the supreme goal of human endeavour. According to the prima facie view, Brahman which abides in the *jīva* as *antaryāmin* would also be affected with the defects found in the bodies of the *jīvas*. The Sūtrakāra, as interpreted by Rāmānuja, rejects this view. He points out that Brahman, in spite of abiding in *jīva* and other physical entities, is untouched by any defects (*na pṛthivyādiṣṭhānato'pi parasya brahmaṇaḥ apuruṣārthagandhaḥ sambhavati*).[1] This is the implication of the word *na sthānato'pi* in the *sūtra*. Why Brahman is not touched by the defects? The answer to this is given in the next words of the *sūtra*, viz., *ubhayaliṅgam sarvatra hi*, which means that in all scriptural and Smṛti texts Brahman is described as possessing twofold characteristics, viz., essentially free from all defilements (*nirasta-nikhila doṣatva*) and endowed with auspicious attributes (*kalyāṇaguṇa-ātmakatva*). Thus says the *Chāndogya Upaniṣadic* text: Brahman is free from evil (*apahatapāpma*), free from old age (*vijara*), free from death (*vimṛtyuḥ*), free from grief (*viśoka*), free from hunger (*vijighitsuḥ*), free from thirst (*apipāsaḥ*), whose needs are self-fulfilled (*satyakāmaḥ*) and whose desires are not obstructed (*satyasaṅkalpaḥ*).[2] In the same text the twofold characteristic of Brahman is explicitly mentioned. There are many other Upaniṣadic texts referring to either of these aspects of Brahman and these are quoted by Rāmānuja in his comment on the subsequent *sūtras* in support of his explanation. The *Viṣṇupurāṇa* also reiterates the same view.[3]

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[1] See *SB*, III.2.11.

[2] See *Kaṭha. Up.*, III.15: *Aśabdam, asparśam arūpam-avyayam*.... *Bṛ. Up.*, III.8.8: *Asthūlam anaṇu ahrasvam adīrgham*.... *Muṇḍ. Up.*, II.1.2: *Divyo hy-amūrtaḥ puruṣaḥ*.

Madhva interprets this *sūtra* differently. This *adhikaraṇa* which is named by him as Sthānabhedādhikaraṇa is intended to establish that the divine personality is always identical in its infinite perfection and absolute blemishlessness in all places of its presence and manifestation. Accordingly, the term *ubhayaliṅga* in the *sūtra* is taken in a different sense. *Ubhaya* means *bhinna* or different and *liṅga* means *rūpa* or essential character. The term taken along with the words *na sthānato'pi* in the *sūtra* is interpreted to mean that in spite of difference of places, there is no difference in respect of the essential character of Brahman as the perfect Being.[4] In other words, Brahman is equally perfect in all its forms everywhere. This concluson is supported by quoting a scriptural statement drawn from *Aitareya Āraṇyaka* which says: "The wise ones proclaim that everywhere (in the world of matter) and among the living creatures (as well as the different loci of their bodies), it has identical character of infinite perfections."[1] This is the implication of the words *sarvatra hi* in the *sūtra.*

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[1] See *RB*, III.2.11.

[2] See *Ch. Up.*, VIII.1.5: *Eṣa ātmā apahatapāpma vijaro vimṛtuḥ viśoko vijighitsoḥ apipāsaḥ satyakāmaḥ satyasaṁkalpaḥ.*

[3] *VP*, *Samasta heyarahitam…samasta kalyāṇaguṇātmaka asau.*

[4] *MSB*, III.2.1: *Sthānāpekṣaya'pi paramātmano na bhinna rūpam.*

Thus we have three different explanations on this crucial *sūtra.* All the subsequent *sūtras* of this *adhikaraṇa* are also interpreted by the commentators to fit in with the main thesis maintained by them. We may pass over these details and only examine the main issue, viz., whether any of these *sūtras* refer to the *nirviśeṣa* Brahman as distinct from *saviśeṣa* Brahman. The present *sūtra* as we have already explained does not lend any support to Śaṁkara's theory. In the first place the term *ubhayaliṅgam* used by the Sūtrakāra to describe the nature of Brahman may mean either two modes of description of Brahman, as Śaṁkara interprets or twofold character of Brahman, as Rāmānuja explains. Denial of both the forms of Brahman and the acceptance of only one of them, viz., *nirviśeṣatva* character of Brahman on the basis of a few scriptural texts is open to criticism, since it is possible, by adopting the same logic, to assert the other one too, viz., the *saviśeṣatva* character of Brahman. The scriptural texts support both the views, as Rāmānuja has pointed out. Śaṁkara anticipates this objection and answers it on the ground of *upādhi* or the limiting adjuncts caused by *māyā.* That is, *nirviśeṣa* Brahman can also be conceived as *saviśeṣa* on account of the same being conditioned by limiting adjuncts. This explanation would be sustainable if Bādarāyaṇa too accepted the theory of *māyā* or *avidyā* as conceived by Śaṁkara. As will be seen later, it is not so. In view of this, the word *sthānataḥ* in the *sūtra* does not imply the limiting adjuncts. Considering the context of the *sūtra,* as explained by Rāmānuja, *sthānataḥ* implies abiding place, that is, the bodies of *jīva* and other physical entities in which Brahman abides as *Antaryāmin,* Further, Bādarāyaṇa has not mentioned in any of the *adhikaraṇas* in the first three *pādas* of the *Vedāntasūtra* which is mainly devoted to the discussion of the nature of Brahman that it is *nirviśeṣa* or *nirguṇa.* As we have already observed, all these *sūtras* present Brahman as *saviśeṣa.* It is therefore unlikely that in the present *sūtra* (III.2.11) Bādarāyaṇa would have declared Brahman as *nirviśeṣa.*

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[1] *Aitareya Āraṇyaka,* III.2.3: *Sarveṣu bhūteṣu etameva brahmety-ācakṣate.*

Another *sūtra* in this *adhikaraṇa* in which the word *arūpa* is mentioned appears to lend some support to the theory of *nirviśeṣa* Brahman. The *sūtra* reads: *arūpavadeva hi tat-pradhānatvāt.*[1] Śaṁkara makes use of this *sūtra* to defend his position. He interprets it to mean that Brahman is to be understood as devoid of any form and not as having a form (*rūpādi ākārarahitameva brahma avadhāritavyam na rūpādimat*), because that view is the important one. He quotes a few Upaniṣadic texts which describe Brahman by denying certain qualities in such terms as *aśabda, asparṣa, amūrta, arūpa, avyaya,* etc.[2] Those Upaniṣadic statements which speak of Brahman as possessing qualities are meant for the purpose of meditation, contends Śaṁkara (*upāsanā-vidhipradhānāni hi tāni*).

Whether the description of Brahman as *arūpa* implies the *nirviśeṣa* Brahman is questioned by Rāmānuja. According to him, this *sūtra* (III.2.14) means that Brahman, though it is associated with the physical bodily forms of divine and human beings, as a consequence of its entry into them, is yet devoid of physical form (*devādi śarīra anupraveśe tena tena rūpeṇa yuktamapi arūpvadeva tat, brahma-rūparahita tulyameva*).[3] This is possible in the case of Brahman because its presence in the bodies of divine and human beings is primarily for the purpose of controlling everything from within, which is its main function as declared by the Śruti (*nirvāhakatvena pradhānatvāt*).[4] The *jīva* needs a physical body to experience *sukha* and *duḥkha* in accordance with its *karma* but it is not so in the case of Brahman which is free from *karma.*

Madhva also does not admit that the term *arūpa* in the *sūtra* means devoid of a form. It merely implies that Brahman is devoid of material form.

One other *sūtra* in this *adhikaraṇa* is also claimed by Śaṁkara to support the theory of *nirviśeṣa* Brahman. The *sūtra* reads: *āha ca tanmātram.*[5] It means, according to Śaṁkara, that scriptural texts speak of Brahman as knowledge only (*caitanya-mātram*) and that it is devoid of all other characteristics (*nirviśeṣa*). In support of it he quotes the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* which says that Brahman is altogether a mass of knowledge (*kṛtsnaḥ prajñāṇaghana eva*). While we may accept this statement, it does not necessarily imply that Brahman does not possess other characteristics. As Rāmānuja points out in his comment on this *sūtra*, the Upaniṣadic text which defines Brahman as *satya* (reality), *jñāna* (knowledge), and *ananta* (infinite) does not exclude the other *guṇas* such as *sarvajñatva* and *satya-saṅkalpatva*, etc. mentioned in the Upaniṣads.

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[1] *VS,* III.2.14.

[2] See *supra,* p. 56, n. 2.

[3] See *RB,* II.2.14

[4] Ibid., see also *Ch. Up.,* VIII.14.1: *Ākāśo ha vai nāmarūpayoḥ nirvahitā te yadantarā tad-brahma.*

[5] *VS,* III.2.16.

According to Bādarāyaṇa also, the description of Brahman by the Upaniṣad in terms of negative qualities does not imply that it is *nirviśeṣa*. This point is well brought out by him in the Adṛśyatvādhikaraṇa and Akṣarādhikaraṇa. The main *sūtra* of the former *adhikaraṇa* which is based on the *Chāndogya Upaniṣadic* text describing *akṣara* and *bhūtayoni* in negative terms such as *adṛśeya* states that it is Brahman as qualified with attributes such as invisibility (*adṛśyatvādi-guṇako dharmokteḥ*). Śaṁkara also tacitly acknowledges it.[1] Similarly, the *sūtra* of the Akṣarādhikaraṇa, which is based on the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣadic* text describing *akṣara* with negative concepts such as *asthūla, anaṇu,* etc. mentions in clear terms that it is Brahman because of its being the supporter of entire cosmos (*ambarānta-dhṛteḥ*) and that it is the commanding Ruler of all (*sā ca praśāsanāt*), both of which constitute distinctive characteristics. The *sūtras* of this *adhikaraṇa* do not, therefore, lend any support to the theory of *nirviśeṣa* Brahman.

THE NEGATION OF TWO MODES OF BRAHMAN

The other important *adhikaraṇa* named as Prakṛtaitāvattvādhikaraṇa[2] is specially claimed by Śaṁkara to support his doctrine of *nirviśeṣa* Brahman and also the illusory character of the universe (*mithyātva*). The main *sūtra* reads: *prakṛtaitāvattvam hi pratiṣedhati tato bravītica bhūyaḥ.*[3] The general meaning is, according to Śaṁkara, that the Upaniṣadic text "*neti neti* (not this, not this) negates in respect of Brahman the predication of the two forms mentioned in the earlier part of the passage and this is supported by what is said later on about Brahman. According to Rāmānuja, the *sūtra* means that the text (with reference to the context) denies only the limited aspects of

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[1] See *SB*, I.2.21: *Yo adṛśyatvādi guṇako bhūtayoniḥ parameśvara eva syāt na anyat.*

[2] This is treated by Rāmānuja as part of Ubhayaliṅgādhikaraṇa. Madhva names it as Pālakatvādhikaraṇa and the subject dealt in it is different from what Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja mention.

[3] *VS*, III.2.22 acc. *SB*; III.2.21 acc. *RB*.

Brahman described earlier in the passage because (the text) further declares the abundance of the glory of Brahman. Madhva's explanation of the *sūtra* will be discussed separately.

The fuller implication of the *sūtra* can be made out with reference to the passage of *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad,* on the basis of which this *sūtra* is formulated, both according to Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja. As this is an important subject of controversy, it is desirable to go over the entire passage in order to understand the correct import of the *sūtra.* This passage, which is known as the Mūrtāmūrta Brāhmaṇa, commences with the statement that Brahman has two forms (*rūpa*) described as *mūrta* (gross) and *amūrta* (subtle), *martyaṁ* (mortal) and *amṛtaṁ* (non-mortal), non-pervasive (*sthitaṁ*) and pervasive (*sacca*), and *yacca* (visible) and *tyacca* (non-visible).[1] It then points out what these forms are in respect of cosmos and the individual soul in which these are found. The earth, water and fire are *mūrta* forms, while the air (*vāyu*) and the etherial space (*antarikṣa*) are the *amūrta* forms. The shining orb of the sun (*āditya-maṇḍala*) is the essence of the cosmic aspect of this *mūrta* forms, whereas the *Puruṣa* (Supreme Being) in the Sun's orb is the essence of cosmic aspect of *mūrta* forms. With regard to the individual soul (*Adhyātma* aspect), the vital breath (*prāṇa*) and the interior space (*antarātmannākāśa*) are the *mūrta* forms, while the rest of the parts of the body constitute the *amūrta* forms. The essence of the latter is the *Puruṣa* (Supreme Being) inside the right eye (*dakṣiṇe akṣan puruṣa*).

The passage then proceeds to describe the aesthetic aspect of Brahman by comparing it to the yellow coloured robe (*mahārajanam vāsaḥ*), white wool (*pāṇḍvāvika*), the beetle (*indragopa*), the flame of fire (*agnyarciḥ*), the lotus flower (*puṇḍarīka*) and the flash of lightning (*sakṛd-vidyut*); one who knows it as such attains the glory similar to the lightning (*sakṛd-vidyūtteva hāsya śrīrbhavati*).[2]

After narrating all these details about the two forms (*rūpa*) of Brahman, the passage comes out with the following significant statement which is treated as *ādeśa* or philosophic instruction: *athāta ādeśo neti neti; na hy-etasmād iti, nety-anyatparam asti; atha nāmadheyam, satyasya satyam prāṇā vai satyam eṣāmeṣa satyam iti.*[3] It means, according to Śaṁkara: "Now, therefore, the teaching, 'not this and not this';

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[1] *Br. Up.*, II.3.1: *Dvevāva brahmaṇo rūpe mūrtaṁ ca amūrtaṁ ca martyaṁ ca amṛtaṁ ca sthitaṁ ca sacca yacca tyacca....*

[2] Ibid., II.3.2-5.

[3] Ibid., II.3.6.

there is nothing other than this and different from this (Brahman) described as 'not this'. Then its name as the reality of the reals; real is *prāṇa* and this (Brahman) is the real of the *prāṇas*."

The interpretation of this passage by Rāmānuja will be discussed later on. For the present we may attempt to understand the fuller meaning of the *sūtra* with reference to the Upaniṣadic passage.

The word *prakṛtaitāvattvam* in the *sūtra* means what has been described by the passage upto the point of *neti neti*. That is, it refers to the description of Brahman as possessing the two forms, *mūrta* and *amūrta*, etc. The next word in this *sūtra*, *niṣedhati*, means that it negates the two forms with the words *neti*, *neti* or 'not this, not this'. The important question which needs to be considered is: what exactly is the implication of this negation? Does the text negate everything other than Brahman or does it negate merely the limited aspects of Brahman as described by the passage?

In interpreting this *sūtra*, Śaṁkara himself raises the question whether this negation is to be taken as negation of both Brahman and its two forms described in the Upaniṣad. The prima facie view adopts this line of argument. But the Sūtrakāra, as interpreted by Śaṁkara, rejects it. If everything is denied including Brahman, nothing stands affirmed and negation without any affirmative basis is self-defeating. The entire teaching of the Upaniṣads about Brahman would also be nullified. All negation requires an undeniable positive ground and Brahman is that ground. Hence, other than Brahman everything else is negated. This interpretation, Śaṁkara contends, is supported by what follows after the declaration *neti neti*. By way of explanation, he points out that the two forms described about Brahman are erroneously superimposed on Brahman and the negation applies to the falsely imagined forms of Brahman (*kalpitarūpa*) and not Brahman itself.[1] The double negation is intended to negate the visible and invisible forms described earlier. Alternatively, first *neti* applies to the cosmic elements as the form of Brahman and the second negation applies to the *vāsanā-rāśi* or the latent mental impressions which are responsible for the false imagination of Brahman as possessing forms. It may also mean 'all that is conceived to exist other than Brahman'. What is, therefore, negated is the universe falsely imposed on Brahman. Brahman which transcends all that is negated is the Absolute Reality which is devoid of all determinations.[1] This is confirmed by the later statement designating Brahman as the Real of reals. This in brief is the import of the *sūtra*, according to Śaṁkara.

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[1] See *SB*, III.2.22: *Tatra kalpita rūpa pratyākhyānena brahmaṇaḥ svarūpāvedanam idamiti nirṇīyate. Tadāspadaṁ hi idaṁ samastaṁ karyaṁ neti neti pratiṣiddham.*

Rāmānuja brings out the import of the *sūtra* by adhering faithfully to the wording of the *sūtra* and in particular the negative terms *neti neti* with reference to the entire passage of the Upaniṣad. He raises the question, as prima facie view, which reflects Śaṁkara's interpretation, whether it would be possible to maintain the *ubhayaliṅgatva* of Brahman considering the fact that the words 'not this, not this' of the Upaniṣadic passage denies of Brahman all the previously stated modes (*prakāra*), viz., *mūrta* and *amūrta*, so that it can only be regarded as *sanmātra* or pure consciousness only as stated in an earlier *sūtra* (III.2.16). The reply given in the *sūtra* in terms of negation as 'not this, not this' does not deny in respect of Brahman the distinctive characteristics or the two modes declared previously, because that would be senseless to teach them first and then finally deny the same. There is no indication in the passage to suggest that these are falsely imposed on Brahman. On the contrary, it merely denies the *prakṛtaitāvattva* or the limited nature of Brahman as previously stated. In other words, it denies that Brahman possesses only this much of qualifications as described previously. The word *iti* or so, refers to that limited nature and the phrase *na iti* (not so), therefore, means that Brahman is not distinguished only by the previously stated modes.[2] Rāmānuja points out that this interpretation is further confirmed by the fact that subsequent to the *neti neti* significant positive statements are made about Brahman. Thus states the Upaniṣad: *na hy-etasmād-iti, nety-anyat param-asti; atha nāmadheyam, satyasya satyam*.... It means, according to Rāmānuja, there is nothing higher or greater than Brahman referred to earlier as implied by the two words *anyat* and *para* in the text. In other words, no other Being which is more glorious both in respect of *svarūpa* and *guṇa* ever exists. This is indicated by the designation (*nāmadheya*) of Brahman as *satyasya satyam*, which means Reality of the reals. *Satya*, according to the Upaniṣad is *prāṇa* (*prāṇa vai satyam*). The term *prāṇa* stands for *jīva* because the *jīva* functions with the association of *prāṇa*. *Jīva* is regarded as real (*satya*) because its *svarūpa* is unchanging, unlike the

[1] *Tasmāt prapañcameva brahmaṇi kalpitam pratiṣedhati, pariśinaṣṭi brahmeti nirṇayaḥ.*

[2] See *RB*, III.2.21: *Ye brahmaṇo viśeṣāḥ prakṛtaḥ, tadviśiṣṭasya brahmaṇaḥ pratīyamāna iyattā neti neti pratiṣiddhyate.*

material object which undergoes total transformation. Brahman is more real than the *jīvas* since the former is never subject to any change unlike the *jñāna* of *jīva*, which during the state of bondage becomes subject to contraction and expansion according to its *karma.* Brahman ever remains unchanging both in respect of its *svarūpa* and *jñāna* as it is free from *karma* (*apahata pāpma*). It is, therefore, the highest Reality. The positive statements made in the Upaniṣad subsequent to the negation as *neti neti*, emphasizes this glory of Brahman. This is the implication of the words *bhuyaḥ tato bravīti* in the *sūtra* which means that the text further says more about Brahman. Thus, it follows that the *sūtra* does not prove that Brahman is *nirviśeṣa* but on the contrary it affirms that it is *saviśeṣa* or endowed with the twofold characteristic (*ubhayaliṅga*) as stated by the Sūtrakāra.

Madhva offers an altogether different explanation. He names this *adhikaraṇa* as Pālakatvādhikaraṇa and taking his stand on the basis of a scriptural text drawn from the *Ṛgveda*, he reads into the *sūtra* the idea of Brahman as *pālaka* or protector and *poṣaka* or nourisher of all. Accordingly, this *sūtra* means for Madhva that Brahman is not merely the creator and destroyer of the universe but it is also the protector and nourisher of all. What is denied is that it is only creator and destroyer and what is affirmed is that Brahman is also *pālaka.* It is difficult to appreciate the relevancy of this subject in this section of *Brahmasūtra*, since this point is already covered in the very second aphorism of *Brahmasūtra* while defining Brahman as the cause of the three cosmic functions, *janma, sthiti* and *bhaṅga.* The function of *sthiti* also includes protection. It cannot be said that the concept of *ubhayaliṅgatva* mentioned in the third *adhyāya* and the description of two modes of Brahman based on *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, is irrelevant, as the followers of Madhva contend. If it were not important, Bādarāyaṇa would not have introduced this *sūtra* while dealing with the nature of Brahman as *ubhayaliṅga.* Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja would not have devoted so much attention to this topic. Besides, no other *sūtra* directly mentions the *nirdoṣatva* character or that Brahman is free from all defilements. This is, therefore, an important characteristic of Brahman and it is appropriately brought up in this *adhikaraṇa* in the context of the *jīva* being subjected to suffering in different states and for the purpose of pointing out that Brahman is free from it and that it is the worthy object of meditation.

We are now confronted with the main question, viz., whether the present *sūtra* supports the theory of *nirviśeṣa* Brahman as claimed by

Śaṁkara. If we take into consideration the import of the *sūtra* as explained by Rāmānuja with due reference to the entire passage of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, it becomes difficult to accept Śaṁkara's interpretation. If we dispassionately look at the words of these *sūtras*, we cannot help feeling that Śaṁkara is importing into them the Advaita theory of *nirviśeṣa* Brahman. No where else in the *Vedāntasūtras* there is any explicit mention of the terms, *nirviśeṣa, nirguṇa, nirvikalpaka.* It is, therefore, most unlikely that Bādarāyaṇa would have advanced this theory in these two *adhikaraṇas.* Whether or not the Upaniṣad supports it is a different issue and it will be examined separately in chapter 9.

The theory of two Brahmans is also closely linked with the theory of two types of knowledge, viz., *parā vidyā* and *aparā vidyā.* The former is claimed by Śaṁkara to teach or reveal the higher Brahman. The Upaniṣad mentions these terms. The relevant Upaniṣadic text of the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* in which *parā vidyā* is mentioned is quoted both by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja as the *viṣaya vākya* for the *sūtra* stating Brahman as *adṛśya* etc. The Imperishable Reality (*akṣara*) which stands for higher Brahman, according to Śaṁkara, is known by *parā vidyā* (*atha parā, yayā tad-akṣaram adhigamyate*). But we have already observed in our examination of this *adhikaraṇa* that the *Akṣara* referred to by the Upaniṣad is qualified by the negative attributes as the *sūtra* itself says (*adṛśyatvādi guṇako dharmokteḥ*). Thus, what is comprehended by the *parā vidyā* as understood in the sense of the Upaniṣad need not necessarily be *nirviśeṣa* Brahman. If the term *parā vidyā* is understood in the sense of direct knowledge of Brahman arising from meditation (*yoga janya jñāna*) as compared to the textual mediate knowledge (*parokṣa jñāna*) derived from mere study of the sacred texts, as interpreted by Rāmānuja, it would not support the contention of Śaṁkara.

The theory of two Brahmans is also linked with the doctrine of *māyā* or *avidyā* since the *Nirguṇa* Brahman is conceived as *Saguṇa* Brahman due to the limiting adjuncts caused by *avidyā.* Whether or not this doctrine is sustainable is a different issue and we shall consider it separately in the subsequent chapters. For the present it may be noted that as far as the *sūtras* go there is not much support for the theory of *Nirguṇa* Brahman.

Chapter 5

The Doctrine of the Universe

In the chapter on the nature of Brahman, we have seen how Bādarāyaṇa has advanced the theory of Brahman as the primary cause of creation, sustenance and dissolution of the universe. The universe having its origin in Brahman would imply that there is a causal relationship between Brahman and the universe. In this connection two important philosophical issues arise. The first one is related to the nature of the causality. The Indian Logic conceives three kinds of causality. Taking the common example of a lump of clay and a pot made out of it, clay is regarded as the material cause (*upādāna kāraṇa*); the potter who produces it is the instrumental cause (*nimitta kāraṇa*) and the accessories needed for its production such as the potter's wheel, stick, etc., are the accessory cause (*sahakāri-kāraṇa*). In the case of Brahman and the universe, what is the material cause, who is the instrumental cause and what are the accessories needed for this purpose? If Brahman itself is the *upādāna kāraṇa,* would it not be subject to transformation as in the case of the lump of clay which is turned into the pot?

The second issue which is of greater importance is related to the ontological status of the universe. The question raised in this regard is whether the universe which is caused by Brahman is real or it is an illusory manifestation of Brahman? This is a major ontological problem in the Vedānta involving a good deal of controversy between Advaita and other schools of Vedānta. Bādarāyaṇa has covered both these theories in the *Vedāntasūtra* and it is important to know his views on the subject. We shall discuss them in the present chapter.

BRAHMAN AS MATERIAL CAUSE OF THE UNIVERSE

The Prakṛtyadhikaraṇa deals directly with the subject of causality of Brahman. The relevant *sūtra* reads: *prakṛtiśca pratijñā dṛṣṭānta* *anuparōdhāt.*[1] Its general meaning is, as interpreted by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, that Brahman is both the material and instrumental cause since this view would not conflict with the general statement and the illustrations mentioned in the Upaniṣad. The Upaniṣadic passages contain statements which point out that by the knowledge of the one principle everything else becomes known (*eka vijñānena anyat sarvam vijñātaṁ bhavati*). Thus says the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad:* "Have you ever asked that instruction by which that which is not heard becomes heard; that which is not perceived, becomes perceived; that which is not known, becomes known." By way of illustrating the statement, the Upaniṣad states: "My dear, as by one lump of clay all that is made of clay is known; as by one nugget of gold all that is made of gold is known; as by one pair of nail scissors all that is made of iron becomes known."[2] The general statement about the knowledge of one leads to the knowledge of everything else is named *pratijñā* or declaration and the illustrations offered by the Upaniṣad to clarify this point are regarded as *dṛṣṭānta.* If we take into consideration these illustrations, it is obvious that the knowledge of the material cause leads to the knowledge of the products made out of it. On the same analogy, it is maintained that if Brahman is regarded as the material cause of the universe, everything else in the universe would be known. This is the implication of the word *prakṛti* in the *sūtra* which is taken in the sense of *upādāna kāraṇa.*[3] The word *ca* added to it implies that it is also the instrumental cause (*nimitta kāraṇa*). Both Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja agree that Bādarāyaṇa is of the view that Brahman is both the material and instrumental cause of the universe. The reason for holding this view is furnished in the *sūtra,* viz., that *pratijñā* and *dṛṣṭānta* mentioned in the Upaniṣad would not be contradicted.

That Bādarāyaṇa upholds the theory of Brahman as the *upādāna kāraṇa* is further confirmed by him in the four subsequent *sūtras,* each of which advances additional supporting arguments. Firstly, the Upaniṣadic texts point out that Brahman itself resolved to become the universe in the following words: 'May I be many,' 'May

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[1] *VS,* I.4.23 acc. *SB* and *RB;* I.4.24 acc. *MSB.*

[2] *Ch. Up.,* VI.1.2-6: *Uta tam ādeśam aprākṣyo yena aśrutaṁ śrutaṁ bhavati amataṁ matam avijñātaṁ vijñātaṁ; yathā saumya ekena mṛtpiṇḍena sarvaṁ mṛṇmayaṁ vijñataṁ syāt.*

[3] The term *prakṛti* according to the grammarian, means material cause. See Pātañjali (I.4.30): *Jani kartuḥ prakṛtiḥ.*

I grow forth.'[1] Secondly, the passages state that all things originate from Brahman and also they get absorbed into it. What is regarded as an effect can merge only in its material cause.[2] Thirdly, the *sūtra* uses the phrase *pariṇāmāt* which means that Brahman itself evolves into the universe.[3] In what manner the modification takes place will be explained later. Fourthly, some of the Upaniṣads state that Brahman is *yoni* or the source. Thus states the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad: kartāram īśaṁ puruṣaṁ brahma yonim.*[4] These are the explanations as interpreted by Śaṁkara with which Rāmānuja generally agrees. However, Rāmānuja advances detailed explanation to justify how Brahman is both *upādāna* and *nimitta kāraṇa* and also how the *pariṇāma* attributed to Brahman does not involve any change in respect of its *svarūpa.* This point will be explained later. For the present we may take note of the fact that Bādarāyaṇa is of the view that Brahman is the material and instrumental cause of the universe.

Madhva does not admit that Brahman is the *upādāna kāraṇa.* He offers a radically different interpretation of the *sūtra.* The term *prakṛti,* which generally stands for the primordial cosmic matter is taken to mean Brahman or Viṣṇu. In order to justify the *sarvaśabda samanvaya* in respect of Brahman, even feminine word such as *prakṛiti* used in the scripture is interpreted by Madhva as Brahman. Brahman is called *prakṛti* because its creative activity (*kṛti*) is stupendous (*prakarṣeṇa karoti iti prakṛtiḥ*). It enters into the *prakṛti,* the primordial cosmic matter so as to enable the latter to evolve from the subtle to the grosser states of *mahat, ahaṁkāra,* etc. Since *prakṛti* is a non-sentient entity, it cannot evolve on its own. Brahman causes its evolution and hence it is only the *nimitta kāraṇa,* whereas, *prakṛti* or the primordial cosmic matter is the material cause of the universe. Madhva draws a different scriptural text as the *viṣaya-vākya* for this *sūtra.* It states: "Verily all the names principally denote this person just as all the rivers destined to reach the sea flow towards it and enter it. Likewise all names find their fulfilment in Brahman."[5] On the basis of this text which contains a general statement and also an illustration, Madhva interprets the *sūtra* to mean that Viṣṇu is *nimitta kāraṇa.* In order to fit in with this view, all the other four *sūtras* in this *adhikaraṇa* are interpreted by Madhva differently. It is outside the scope of our study to discuss the merit of this explanation. However, we cannot say with certainty that Bādarāyaṇa subscribes to the view that Brahman is only *nimitta kāraṇa.* If that were so, he would not have criticized the theories of Sāṁkhya, Yoga, Pāśupata, etc. who do not accept *upādāna kāraṇatva* for *Īśvara.* Besides, the *sūtra* has a direct bearing on the passage of *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* in which the *pratijñā* and *dṛṣṭānta* referred to in the *sūtra* find a clear mention. Madhva ignores this passage supporting the *upādāna kāraṇatva* and affirms that Brahman is only *nimitta kāraṇa* presumably to avoid *vikāra* or modification in respect of Brahman. But as will be explained presently, Brahman can be considered as *upādāna kāraṇa,* as Sūtrakāra himself admits it, without affecting its *nirvikāratva.*

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[1] *VS,* I.4.24: *Abhidyeyopadeśācca.* See also *Tait. Up., So'kāmayata bahusyāṁ prajāyeyeti.* See also *Ch. Up.,* VI.2.3.

[2] *VS,* I.4.25: *Sākṣācca ubhayāmnānāt.*

[3] *VS,* I.4.26: *Ātmakṛteḥ pariṇāmāt.*

[4] *VS,* I.4.27: *Yoniśca hi gīyate. See Muṇḍ. Up.,* I.1.7. Also I.1.6: *Yadbhūtayoniṁ paripaśyanti dhīrāḥ.*

[5] *Etameva puruṣaṁ sarvāṇi nāmāni abhivadanti yathā nadyaḥ syandamānāḥ samudrāyaṇāḥ samudram abhiviśanti evameva etāni nāmāni sarvāṇi puruṣam abhivadanti iti pratijñā dṛṣṭānta anuparodhāt prakṛti śabda vācy'opi sa eva,* quoted in Madhva's *Brahmasūtra Bhāṣya,* I.4.24.

If Brahman itself becomes the universe, would it not be subject to modification (*vikāra*) as in the case of the lump of clay into the pot. Secondly, does the entire Brahman undergo transformation into the universe or only a part of it. In either case it affects the very nature of Brahman which being indivisible is not subject to any change. Both these objections are anticipated by Bādarāyaṇa himself who has squarely answered them. The relevant *sūtra* which speaks of the modification of Brahman as universe reads: *ātmakṛteḥ pariṇāmāt.*[1] This *sūtra* is split up into two by Rāmānuja, whereas it is one for Śaṁkara and Madhva. But Śaṁkara concedes in his comment that *pariṇāmāt* can be treated as a separate *sūtra.* The meaning of *ātmakṛteḥ* is, as accepted by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, that Brahman makes itself into the universe. That is, Brahman is both the subject of creation, *kartā* and also the object of creation or the created object, *karma.* Thus says the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad,* "That (Brahman) evolved itself into its own Self."[2] The explanation as to how Brahman itself becomes the universe is contained in the word *pariṇāmāt* mentioned in the *sūtra,* which means 'owing to modification.' Śaṁkara explains this word in a simple way: "The self although in full existence previously to the action modifies itself

[1] *VS,* I.4.26 acc. *SB;* I.4.26 & 27 acc. *RB;* I.4.27 acc. *MSB.*

[2] *Tait. Up.: Tat ātmānaṁ svayam akuruta.*

into something special namely the Self of the effect."[1] Thus we see the causal substances such as clay and the like, by undergoing the process of modification, are transformed into their products. The word *svayaṁ* meaning itself quoted in the passage indicates the absence of any other operative cause but the Self. It may be noted that neither the *sūtra* nor the comment on it by Śaṁkara uses the concept of *vivarta* or illusory manifestation of Brahman as *jagat*, as maintained by the later Advaita commentators.

Rāmānuja explains the word *pariṇāmāt* in the sense of *pariṇāma svābhāvyāt*, which means that Brahman possesses the characteristic of modification.Its fuller implication is that Brahman is of such a nature as it is capable of undergoing modification without at the same time its *svarūpa* being subject to change. This is possible because Brahman is conceived as inseparably related to the souls and cosmic matter (*cid-acid-viśiṣṭa Brahma*). Brahman is always associated with *cit* and *acit* both in the states prior to creation and also after creation. In the state prior to creation Brahman is associated with *cit* and *acit* in their subtle state and the same Brahman, when it wills to become many, manifests itself as associated with *cit* and *acit* in their manifested form. This explanation has the full support of the scriptural texts. Thus says the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad:* "This universe consisting of souls and matter existed prior to creation in unmanifested form; it then became manifest with name and form."[2] All changes apply to *cit* and *acit* and not to Brahman. But Brahman as the substrate of *cit* and *acit* is not affected by the change. This is illustrated by the analogy of a boy growing into youth and the youth attaining manhood. In this instance, the different states such as youth, manhood, etc., involving change actually belong to the body and the soul which is the basis of the body is in no way affected by it. In the same way the modification taking place in the *acit* and *cit* do not affect the *svarūpa* of Brahman which is its *ādhāra* or substrate. Brahman is regarded as the *upadāna kāraṇa* by virtue of its being the substrate of *acit* which actually undergoes modification. It is only in this sense that the *pariṇāma* of Brahman is to be understood in order to avoid its *nirvikāratva*. Even Advaita Vedānta accounts for the material causality only on the basis of Brahman being the substrate for *māyā*. If *māyā* is identified

[1] See *SB*, I.2.26: *Pūrvasiddhopi hi san ātmā viśeṣeṇa vikārātmanā pariṇāmayāmāsa ātmānam iti.*

[2] *Bṛ. Up.*, I.4.7: *Tad-dhe-daṁ tarhi avyākṛtam āsīt tannāmarūpābhyām eva vyākriyate.*

with *prakṛti* which is a real ontological entity, there would be no dispute between Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja. But *māyā* is taken as a cosmic principle of illusion without accepting it as a real entity. We shall consider the merits of these interpretations separately. For the present we have to find out the view of Bādarāyaṇa on this subject. Though it may be questioned whether Bādarāyaṇa meant by *pariṇāma* what Rāmānuja states, it is at least obvious that he does not subscribe to the view of *vivartavāda* of Advaita. In the absence of any better explanation, the only plausible theory of *pariṇāma* appears to be what Rāmānuja has offered which can be assumed to reflect the view of Bādarāyaṇa since it has the full support of scriptural texts.

Madhva's interpretation of this *sūtra* on *pariṇāmāt* is not of much help to determine the view of Bādarāyaṇa, since it dismisses straightaway the *upādāna kāraṇatva* of Brahman. For Madhva, Brahman is only *nimitta kāraṇa.* Hence, the word *pariṇāmāt* in the *sūtra* is interpreted by him as *pariṇāmya* or *pariṇamaṁ vidhāya,* that is, after bringing about the transformation in *prakṛti.* The word is to be read according to Madhva in the reverse order, that is, after bringing about the transformation of *prakṛti* (*pariṇāmāt*) it makes itself many through self-manifestation (*ātmakṛteḥ*).[1] Whatever may be the justification of Madhva to give such an explanation, it cannot be taken as representing the view of Bādarāyaṇa for the obvious reason that he upholds the theory of Brahman as *upadāna kāraṇa* on the strength of the Upaniṣadic texts. In the opinion of Bādarāyṇa, though Brahman is the cause of the universe, it is not subject to change or modification, if we take the word *pariṇāma* in the only plausible sense as explained by Rāmānuja. Though *vivartavāda* may offer a better explanation to support the *nirvikāratva* of Brahman, it is not warranted either by the *Vedāntasūtra* or the Upaniṣads. In the same way, by taking Brahman as *nimitta kāraṇa,* as Madhva has done, Brahman's *nirvikāratva* can be protected, but neither the *sūtra* nor the Upaniṣad supports it.

Coming to the second issue, viz., whether Brahman as a whole or in parts transforms itself into the universe, Bādarāyaṇa himself discusses this and provides an appropriate answer to the objection in the Kṛtsnaprasaktyadhikaraṇa. The relevant *sūtra* reads: *kṛtsnaprasaktiḥ niravayatva śabdakopo vā.* Its general meaning is, according to Śaṁkara, if Brahman is wholly transformed into the universe, it would exhaust itself in becoming the universe and there would be no Brahman left other than the universe for the purpose of contemplation and attainment by the seeker of *mokṣa.* If on the other hand, a part of Brahman transformed, Brahman would be divisible. It would then violate the scriptural texts which speak of Brahman as *niravaya* or devoid of parts.

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[1] See Jayatirtha's *Tattva-prakāśikā: prakṛti pariṇāmāt anantaram ātmānam ca mahadādi preraṇāya bahudhā karoti.*

Rāmānuja also explains the *sūtra* in a slightly different way. If the entire Brahman in its causal state as associated with *sūkṣma cit* and *acit* assumes the effect state as associated with *sthūla cit* and *acit,* it would violate the scriptural texts declaring Brahman as devoid of parts even in its causal state. If it is without parts, it cannot become many. It would not be possible to conceive that there persists a part which does not enter into the effected state.

Bādarāyaṇa refutes this objection by taking recourse to the Śruti or the Revealed Scripture as the sole dependable authority to determine these issues.The relevant *sūtra* reads: *śrutestu śabdamūlatvāt* (II.1.27). It means, according to Śaṁkara, that such objections do not hold good on account of scriptural texts (*śruteḥ*) and also on account of the fact that scripture is the only source of our knowledge of Brahman (*śabdamūlatvāt*). According to the explanation of Rāmānuja, such criticisms are not valid because of the scriptural support (*śruteḥ*) and also on account of the fact that Brahman possesses varied powers as established by scripture (*śabdamūlatvāt*).

Though the general import of the *sūtra* appears to be the same for Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, its fuller implications are explained in two different ways. Rāmānuja explains that the inconsistencies pointed out by the *pūrvapakṣa* do not hold good because scripture which is the sole authority for knowing Brahman speaks of both *niravayavatva* and also the possession of highest powers by Brahman. Whatever is stated in the Śruti is to be accepted without questioning. Śruti cannot teach what can be considered to be inconsistent. Since Śruti is the sole *pramāṇa* for Brahman, logical arguments are not sustainable.

Śaṁkara at first offers similar explanation. At the very outset of his comment he states that there are no such inconsistencies in respect of his view. That the entire Brahman undergoing transformation does not happen because the scriptural texts say so. In the same way the scripture speaks of the origin of the universe from Brahman, while at the same time it declares that Brahman subsists unaffected by change. He quotes several Upaniṣadic texts supporting both the views. We have, therefore, to admit the existence of the unmodified form of Brahman in spite of its being the cause of the universe.

After explaining the *sūtra* as it is worded, Śaṁkara raises an objection as to how Śruti can advance contradictory views. By way of answering it, he brings up the theory of illusory appearance of Brahman on the basis of the doctrine of *avidyā* or nescience. The universe and its origination in Brahman are fabrications of mere *avidyā*, the cosmic principle of illusion which conceals the true nature of Brahman and projects its appearance as the universe. What is caused by *avidyā* does not affect the true nature of Brahman which is undifferentiated, unchanging Reality. The implication of this interpretation is that the universe is not really caused or created by Brahman but it is a mere illusory appearance. It is similar to the dream objects which are not actually created but appears to exist during the dream state. This is known as the *vivartavāda* of Advaita Vedānta as against the *pariṇāmavāda* of the theistic schools of Vedānta.

We need not enter into the discussion of the merit of this theory as it is outside the scope of our study. Our main interest is to find out if Bādarāyaṇa accepts the theory of *vivartavāda*. The *sūtras* in the Kṛtsnaprasaktyadhikaraṇa do not mention the concept of *avidyā* or *māyā* as causing the appearance of Brahman as the universe. In the Prakṛtyadhikaraṇa discussing Brahman as the material cause of the universe, Bādarāyaṇa specifically mentions the term *pariṇāma* which only means modification and not illusory appearance. The *sūtras* in the present *adhikaraṇa* are mainly devoted to answer the criticisms against the theory of Brahman becoming the universe either in whole or in parts. In order to meet this objection, he resorts to the scriptural authority and defends his position by an appeal to accept without questioning whatever is taught by the Upaniṣads, even though it may not appear logical. But it is also pointed out in a subsequent *sūtra* that Brahman possesses *vicitraśakti* or special powers to cause the universe through its *pariṇāma* without affecting its *svarūpa*. All the commentators including Madhva are agreed on this point, although each one has offered a different explanation regarding the manner in which Brahman causes the universe. The important point to be taken note for the present is that Bādarāyaṇa is of the view that Brahman is the material cause of the universe without undergoing any change in its *svarūpa*.

THE RELATION OF THE UNIVERSE TO BRAHMAN

This subject is covered in the Ārambhaṇādhikaraṇa comprising a group of seven *sūtras* in the first *pāda* of second *adhyāya*.[1] Though the main *sūtra* as it is worded deals with the causal relationship between Brahman and universe, Śaṁkara makes use of it to prove that the universe is an illusory appearance of Brahman. Rāmānuja, on the contrary, takes this opportunity to refute in great detail the illusory character of the universe and establish the thesis that the material universe constitutes an integral part of Brahman. Surprisingly, Madhva waters down the importance of this topic and gives an altogether different explanation. We shall examine in this section the nature of the relationship and discuss the ontological status of the universe in the next.

The crucial *sūtra* reads: *tadananyatvam ārambhaṇa śabdādibhyaḥ.* It means, according to Śaṁkara, that the universe as an effect is non-different from Brahman as its cause (in the sense that the effect does not have a separate existence apart from the cause) on account of the scriptural word *ārambhaṇa* (origin) and the like used in the Upaniṣadic statements. According to Rāmānuja, it means that the universe and Brahman are non-distinct in the sense that the effect is the modified form of the causal substance for the reason that the Upaniṣadic statement beginning with the word *ārambhaṇa* proves it. Madhva is of the view that this *sūtra* denies the otherness of the independent cause (*svatantra kāraṇa*) of the universe from Brahman. In other words, it affirms through a double negation (*ananyatva*) that Brahman is the independent cause and all the accessories such as *prakṛti, jīvas, kāla, karma,* etc. are by hypothesis metaphysically dependent on Brahman.[2]

We shall attempt to understand the fuller implication of the *sūtra* with reference to the passage of *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* on the basis of which it is formulated, as pointed out by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja. According to *Śaṁkara Bhāṣya,* the word *ārambhaṇa* is used in the *Chāndogya* passage in connection with an illustration intended to show how by the knowledge of one principle, everything else is known. Thus states the Upaniṣad: "My dear, as by the knowledge of one lump of clay, all that is made of clay is known, the modification, (the thing made of clay) being a mere name which has its origin in speech, while the truth is that it is clay only."[1] The meaning of this passage, as explained by Śaṁkara, is that by the knowledge of the lump of the clay, which in reality is constituted of nothing but clay, all the things made of clay such as jars, dishes, pails and so on become known since they are all of the nature of clay. Hence these modifications which are regarded as effects originate from speech only, while in reality no such thing as a modification exists (*vācaiva kevalamasti...na tu vastu-vṛttena vikāraḥ kaścidasti*). In so far as they are names (individual effects distinguished by names), they are untrue; so far as they are clay they are true. This illustration is offered with reference to Brahman in the Upaniṣadic passage (*eṣa brahmaṇo dṛṣṭānta āmnātaḥ*).[2] By applying the phrase, 'having its origin in speech' to the case illustrated by the instance quoted, Śaṁkara contends, that it is to be understood that the entire body of effects has no existence apart from Brahman. The word *adi* used with *ārambhaṇa-śabda* is interpreted to mean other scriptural texts which emphasize the absolute oneness of the Ultimate Reality. In the opinion of Śaṁkara, it is not possible to uphold the thesis that by the knowledge of one reality everything else is known except by denying the reality of effects. The term *ananyatva* in the *sūtra* means for Śaṁkara that the universe as the effect of Brahman has really no existence apart from Brahman as its cause (*brahma vyatirekeṇa kārya jagatasya abhāva iti gamyate*). This in brief is the substance of the *sūtra*, according to Śaṁkara. He advances a few additional arguments by way of answering some objections and asserts the *mithyātva* of the universe and the unitary character of the ultimate Reality. Whether this explanation of Śaṁkara is reflected in the present *sūtra* will be discussed after we have considered the interpretation of Rāmānuja and Madhva on this *sūtra*.

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[1] *VS,* II.1.14-20 acc. *SB;* II.1.15-20 acc. *RB;* II.1.15-21 acc. *MSB.*

[2] See B.N.K Sharma, *The Brahmasūtras,* vol. I, p. 368.

In interpreting this *sūtra*, Rāmānuja first takes up for detailed critical examination the prima facie theory of Naiyāyikas who maintain on the basis of *asatkāryavāda* that *kārya* or the effect is different from *kāraṇa* or the cause. The arguments advanced by them in support of their theory are refuted. In this connection he subjects to a detailed critical examination Śaṁkara's theory of cause and effect as non-different. After setting aside these theories, Rāmānuja conclusively establishes that the universe (*jagat*) as the effect is non-distinct from Brahman, the primary cause of it (*parama kāraṇāt Brahmaṇaḥ ananyatvaṁ jagataḥ*).[1] The reason advanced in support of it, as stated in the *sūtra*, is that the Upaniṣadic texts commencing with the word *ārambhaṇa* prove it. The relevant text reads: *vācārambhaṇam vikāro nāmadheyaṁ mṛttiketyeva satyam.* This statement is interpreted by Rāmānuja in a slightly different way. The word *ārambhaṇa* is taken as a variant of *ālambana* on the basis of a grammatical rule. *Ālambana* means being touched (*spṛśyate*). The *vāk* means speech. The combined word *vācā-ārambhaṇa* means being touched or being connected with speech. That is, the modification (*vikāra*) of clay in the form of configurations such as pot or pitcher and the names adopted to designate them are connected with speech for the purpose of bringing about appropriate transactions such as fetching water. The implication of this explanation is that the pot as an effect of the clay is not an altogether different entity, as Naiyāyikas claim, but on the other hand, it is a modified form of the clay. Though cause and effect may be regarded as distinct but in actuality it is non-distinct in the sense that the pot is only the modified form of the same one substance namely clay (*mṛd-dravyameva saṁsthānāntara nāmadheyāntara-bhāk*). The other important implication of this explanation is that the pot as a modification of the clay is not unreal or non-existent, as Śaṁkara contends. It is as real as the clay. This is the significance of the word *mṛttiketyeva satyam* used in the Upaniṣad (*mṛttikā dravyam ity-eva satyam*). Cause and effect are, therefore, two different states (*avasthās*) of the same one substance.

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[1] See *Ch. Up.*, IV.1.1: *Yathā soumya ekena mṛtpiṇḍena sarvaṁ mṛṇmayaṁ vijñātaṁ syāt, vācārambhaṇaṁ vikāro nāmadheyaṁ mṛttiketyeva satyam.*

[2] See *SB*, II.1.14.

On the basis of these explanations and also the illustrations offered by the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad,* Rāmānuja maintains that Brahman as the cause and the universe as its effect are *ananya* or non-distinct. As pointed out earlier, Brahman is always integrally related to the universe comprising the sentient souls (*cit*) and non-sentient entities (*acit*). In its causal state Brahman is associated with *cit* and *acit* in their unmanifested subtle form (*sūkṣma cid-acid-viśiṣṭa brahma*). When it wills to become many, the same Brahman assumes a state in which it is associated with *cit* and *acit* in their manifested gross form (*sthūla cid-acid-viśiṣṭa brahma*). The former is the causal state and the latter is the effect state. On the analogy of clay and pot the two states are not different since the substance in both is the same. Rāmānuja substantiates this view with the support of sufficient scriptural texts and the theory of causality accepted by the Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta.

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[1] *RB,* II.1.15.

Madhva offers an altogether different explanation of this crucial *sūtra*. In the first place he does not make any reference to the passage of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* in which the word *ārambhaṇa* is used and the same term is adopted in the *sūtra*. He quotes as his *viṣayavākya* a statement from *Ṛgveda* which refers to the origin of the universe. It states: *kiṁsvit āsīt adhiṣṭhānam ārambhaṇaṁ katamat svit kathā āsīt.*[1] It means: 'What could have been the base, the means what was it and how?' The word *ārambhaṇa* appearing here is interpreted by Madhva as *upādāna* or material stuff (*ārabhyate yena tad ārambhaṇam upādānam*). The statement raises as an *ākṣepa* or challenge as to the existence of means and materials such as the *adhiṣṭhāna* (ground), *ārambhaṇa* (material stuff) and *nimitta* (auxiliaries) independently of Brahman in primordial creation. The *pūrvapakṣa* maintains that as in the case of a potter, the creation of the universe needs causal accessories which are independent of the creator. The Sūtrakāra, according to Madhva, repudiates the prima facie view by denying the otherness of the independent cause (*svatantra kāraṇa*) of the universe from Brahman. In other words, the *sūtra* affirms through a double negation (*ananyatva*) that Brahman is that independent cause and all the accessories such as *prakṛti, jīvas, kāla, karma,* etc. are by hypothesis metaphysically dependent on Brahman.[2]

We need not go into the details that justify this interpretation. Our concern here is to find out whether Bādarāyaṇa intended to convey such an idea in the present *sūtra*. If we concede to the general assumption that Bādarāyaṇa has formulated most of the *sūtras* in the first *adhyāya* with reference to the relevant passages of the major Upaniṣads and in particular to *Chāndogya Upaniṣad,* it is improbable that Bādarāyaṇa would have in mind the Ṛgvedic passage as the *viṣayavākya* for this *sūtra*. The first *pāda* of the second *adhyāya* of the *Brahmasūtra* commences with the refutation of the theory advanced by *Kapila Smṛti* (*Sāṁkhya*) and other such Smṛtis challenging Brahman as sole cause of the universe on rational grounds (*yukti*). In this connection it is appropriate that the Sūtrakāra discusses the causal relation of Brahman to the universe in the Ārambhaṇādhikaraṇa with reference to the passage of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. The relationship is described by Bādarāyaṇa in terms of

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[1] *Ṛgveda,* X.81.2.

[2] See B.N.K. Sharma, *Brahmasūtras,* vol. I, pp. 368-69.

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ananyatva which means, as Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja interpret, that Brahman as cause and *jagat* as its effect are non-different. Whether this non-difference is on account of effect being *mithyā*, as Śaṁkara contends or the two represent the different states of the same one substance, as Rāmānuja argues is the issue to be determined. The illustration of clay and pot offered in the Upaniṣad and the words *mṛttika iti eva satyam* or that pot as made of clay alone is the real do not allow for an interpretation of the effect as *mithyā*. As will be pointed out later, no where in the *Vedāntasūtra* there is any mention of the theory of *mithyā* as conceived by Śaṁkara. It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that Bādarāyaṇa, while affirming the non-distinction between Brahman and universe, does not mean the unreality or the illusory character of the latter. Further the six subsequent *sūtras* (II.1.15-20), even according to Śaṁkara's own interpretation, defend the *satkāryavāda* and as such they do not support the *mithyātva* of the universe.

The nature of the relationship between Brahman and the universe comes up for consideration in a specific way in the Ahikuṇḍalādhikaraṇa covered in the third *adhyāya*, according to Rāmānuja. Śaṁkara is of the view that this *adhikaraṇa* deals with the question of the relation of *jīva* to Brahman. Madhva's view on this topic which differs radically from Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja would be explained later. Nevertheless, the nature of the relationship determined in these *sūtras* would hold good in respect of Brahman and the universe.

In connection with the consideration of the twofold character of Brahman (*ubhayaliṅga*), Bādarāyaṇa introduces three *sūtras* in which he refers to the different views on the nature of the relation in terms of *bhedā-bheda* or difference-cum-non-difference and *abheda* or non-difference by citing two illustrations: (1) the serpent and its coils (*ahi-kuṇḍala*). (2) The luminous body and its light (*prakāśāśrayavat*). The *sūtra* containing the first illustration reads: *ubhaya-vyapadeśāt-tu ahikuṇḍalavat.* It means, according to Śaṁkara, that the relation of Brahman to the individual soul is to be viewed as that between the serpent and its coils. By way of elucidation, he points out that the Upaniṣads speak of difference between the soul and the highest Self and also of non-difference between them. As both cannot be valid, the difference between *jīva* and Brahman is to be regarded as real prior to liberation but it is one of identity after liberation. Accordingly, the nature of the relation is one of difference-cum-non-difference (*bhedā-bheda*) as that between the serpent and its coils, hood, etc. As a serpent it is one but if we look at the coils, hood, etc., there is difference. Similarly, there is both difference and non-difference between Brahman and *jīva*. This is a prima facie view, according to Śaṁkara.

The second *sūtra* containing the illustration of the light and its luminous body reads: *prakāśāśrayavad vā tejastvāt*. It means that alternatively it is like light and its substrate, both being luminous. The implication of this, according to Śaṁkara, is that the light and the luminous body are not absolutely different (*na atyanta bhinna*) since both are luminous in character. However, on account of varying extensity they are spoken as different. Even so is the relation between the soul and Brahman. The former is limited, while the latter is all-pervading. This view is also taken as a prima facie theory.

Rāmānuja offers a different explanation. In the context of the subject of Brahman and its outward manifestation as *mūrtāmūrta prapañca* (universe) discussed in the earlier *sūtras* of the same *adhikaraṇa*, he raises three alternatives in this regard: (1) Is this relationship similar to that of the serpent and its coils? (2) Or is it like that of the luminous body and its light both of which are of the same kind? (3) Or is this relation one of *viśeṣaṇa* or distinguishing attribute to its *viśeṣya* or substance as in the case of *jīva* to Brahman? According to Rāmānuja, the illustration of *ahikuṇḍala* refers to the first alternative. That is, the non-sentient universe constitutes the special form (*saṃsthāna-viśeṣa*) of Brahman, as coil is of the serpent. This represents a prima facie view which upholds non-difference between the two, according to Rāmānuja. The *sūtra* mentioning the illustration of the light and its luminous body also represents a second alternative prima facie theory, according to which there is both difference and non-difference. The light and the luminous body are different but at the same time they are identical in so far as both are of the nature of lustre (*tejas*).

Both according to Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, the two *sūtras* citing significant illustrations cover prima facie theories and as such they do not represent the view of Bādarāyaṇa on the subject of relation. The subsequent *sūtra* which simply reads as *pūrvavad-vā* is taken to present the view of Bādarāyaṇa. The word *pūrvavad* literally means as stated previously. The word *vā* which means 'or' implies that the view contained in the present *sūtra* is different from the two prima facie theories which are considered to be defective. Obviously

Bādarāyaṇa has in mind a theory which is different from both and which is already stated in some earlier *sūtra*. What is that *sūtra* which contains his own view? Śaṁkara, as an advocate of the doctrine of identity of *jīva* and Brahman refers to an earlier *sūtra* in the same *adhikaraṇa* which reads: *prakāśādivacca avaiśeṣyam prakāśaśca karmaṇyabhyāsāt* (III.2.25). It means, according to Śaṁkara's interpretation, that there is non-difference between *jīva* and Brahman as in the case of the luminous body such as the sun. Just as the sun is one but appears as many on account of the limiting adjuncts in the form of waves, Brahman also appears as many *jīvas* due to adjuncts.In reality the two are identical. On the basis of this explanation, Śaṁkara interprets the *sutra* reading as *pūrvavad-vā* to mean that in the opinion of Badarāyaṇa *jīva* and Brahman are identical.

Rāmānuja, on the contrary, explains this *sūtra* in conformity with what Bādarāyaṇa himself has set out explicitly in the *sūtra* of the Aṁśādhikaraṇa (II.3.43) in which the relation of *jīva* to Brahman in terms of *aṁśa-aṁśi bhāva* is mentioned. That is, *jīva* is integrally related to Brahman in the same way as an essential attribute (*viśeṣaṇa*) is to its substrate (*viśeṣya*). On the basis of this theory enunciated by Bādarāyaṇa, Rāmānuja interprets the *sūtra* '*pūrvavadvā*' to mean that the non-sentient universe stands to Brahman in the same relation as the individual soul is to Brahman. The universe is also regarded as an *aṁśa* or an integral part of Brahman since it does not have a separate existence apart from Brahman (*jīvavat pṛthaksiddhyanarha viśeṣaṇatvena acid-vastuno brahmāṁśam*). This is similar to the relation of body to the soul, *śarīra-śarīri-bhāva* adopted by Rāmānuja to explain the relationship between the universe and Brahman on the authority of *Antaryāmī Brāhmaṇa*. The non-sentient universe and so also the sentient souls are the *śarīra* of Brahman in the technical sense that these are necessarily and always supported and controlled by Brahman which is their *antaryāmin* or Soul (*śarīri*).[1] This theory accommodates both difference and non-difference from different standpoints, difference as substance and attribute and non-difference as a substance integrally related to the attribute.

Madhva offers an altogether different interpretation on these crucial *sūtras*. According to him, the subject-matter of these *sūtras* is concerned with the question of the relation of Brahman and its attributes. He raises the issue, claimed as the prima facie theory, whether the attributes such as bliss (*ānanda*), knowledge, power will, etc., can also constitute the essence of Brahman. According to Bādarāyaṇa, as interpreted by Madhva, there is no contradiction in Brahman being the essence of these attributes and also it possessing these attributes as its property since both these facts are borne by the testimony of Śruti. The illustrations cited by Bādarāyaṇa are intended to provide the absolute identity of the attributes with Brahman. Madhva justifies this interpretation on the basis of the doctrine of non-difference between *guṇa* and *guṇi* advocated by him.

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[1] See *RB*, II.3.18: *Yasya cetanasya yaddravyaṁ sarvātmanā svārthe niyantuṁ dhārāyituṁ ca śakyam, taccheṣataika svarūpam ca, tat tasya śarīramiti śarīralakṣaṇam.*

We need not enter into the consideration of the merits of the stand taken by Madhva. Our main concern is to find out the view of Bādarāyaṇa on the nature of the relationship between Brahman and the universe and also Brahman and *jīva* which constitutes a fundamental issue in the Vedānta. Even at the time of Bādarāyaṇa, there were conflicting views as is evident from the references made in the *sūtra* to ancient *ācāryas* such as Auḍulomi, Jaimini, Bādari and Kāśakṛtsna. It was, therefore, important for Bādarāyaṇa to offer his own decisive view on the issue. Both according to Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja,this subject is covered by him in the Vākyānvayādhikaraṇa, Aṁśādhikaraṇa, Ārambhaṇādhikaraṇa and also in the Ahikuṇḍalādhikaraṇa. It is strange that Madhva does not believe that any of these *adhikaraṇas* except Aṁśādhikaraṇa deal with the subject of relationship between Brahman and the other two ontological entities. But Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja who acknowledge the importance of this subject hold divergent views on the nature of the relation. The question we are now confronted is whether Bādarāyaṇa subscribes to the theory of *bheda* or *bhedābheda* or *abheda*. It is not *bheda* or absolute difference since Bādarāyaṇa describes the relation in terms of *ananya* (non-distinct) and *aṁśa* (integral part). Nor is it one of difference-cum-non-difference (*bhedābheda*) since Bādarāyaṇa rejects it, as already explained. Is then the relation of the nature of non-difference (*abheda*) in the manner conceived by Śaṁkara? That is, *jīva* and Brahman are in reality identical, whereas the difference between them is caused by limiting adjuncts (*upādhi*). In the case of Brahman and *jagat*, the former as the cause is real and the latter as the effect is illusory (*mithyā*). This theory would be sustainable if the doctrine of *avidyā* and the *vivartavāda* are accepted. As will be seen presently the *sūtras* do not make any mention of them. We are now left with the theory of *abheda* in the sense plained by Rāmānuja. That is, Brahman and *jīva*, though differ in nature, are one as integrally related (*viśiṣṭaikya-vivakṣayā eka vyapadeśaḥ*).[1] Similarly, Brahman and the universe (*jagat*), thou different in nature are one as organically related like the soul a the body. This theory of *abheda* in the sense of *viśiṣṭaikya* advanc by Rāmānuja is fully supported by Bādarāyaṇa as clearly indicat in the *sūtras* mentioning the terms *aṁśa* and *ananya*.

THE ONTOLOGICAL STATUS OF THE UNIVERSE

We now take up for consideration the major controversial issue i Vedānta relating to the ontological status of the universe. Is th universe illusory (*mithyā*), as Śaṁkara contends or is it real (*satya* as Rāmānuja and Madhva maintain? The students of Vedānta ar fully familiar with the details of both the theories and we need no reiterate them. Our task here is confined to find out the view o Bādarāyaṇa on this important subject. The two *adhikaraṇas* whic directly deal with the causal relation of the universe to Brahman ar the Prakṛtyadhikaraṇa and Ārambhaṇādhikaraṇa. We have alread examined them and observed that the concerned *sūtras* do no mention explicitly that the universe is illusory; nor do they imply indirectly the illusory character of the universe. On the contrary, they support the reality of the universe. In the Prakṛtyadhikaraṇa the Sūtrakāra himself states that Brahman as the material cause modifies itself into the universe (*ātmakṛteḥ pariṇāmāt*). The term *pariṇāma* used by Bādarāyaṇa goes against the concept of *vivarta* or the illusory manifestation of Brahman as the universe, on the basis of which the Advaita Vedānta advances the theory of *mithyātva*. The *sūtras* in the Ārambhaṇādhikaraṇa also do not make any mention of the illusory character of the universe. All the *sūtras* in this *adhikaraṇa* are mainly devoted to explain the causal relationship between the universe and Brahman. The term *ananyatva* used by Bādarāyaṇa emphasizes the fact that cause and effect are not two different entities as maintained by the *asatkāryavāda* of the Naiyāyikas but non-distinct (*ananya*) as a modified product of the same one causal substance, accepted by the *satkāryavāda* of Vedāntins. This is substantiated by the illustration of the nugget of gold and the

[1] See Vedānta Deśika's *Nyāya Siddhāñjana, prakāra prakāriṇoḥ prakārāṇāṁ ca atyanta bhede'pi viśiṣṭaikyādivivakṣayā ekatva vyapadeśaḥ.*

products made out of it cited in the Upaniṣad. The gold nugget as the cause takes the forms of the bangles, necklace, earring, etc. but the latter do not become non-real on account of their being effects.

The Advaitins advance the argument that the causal relationship itself is logically unintelligible (*anupapatti*) and on that account they contend that the cause is only real, whereas the effect is unreal. There is no indication in the *sūtras* of Bādarāyaṇa to support the theory of untenability of the causal relationship. If it were so, Bādarāyaṇa would not have used the term *ananyatva* to explain the causal relationship, particulary after he has upheld the theory of *pariṇāma* or modification in the Prakṛtyadhikaraṇa.

Are there any *aphorisms* in other parts of *Brahmasūtra* in which mention is made even indirectly of the illusory character of the universe? The first *adhyāya* is devoted primarily to establish that Brahman is the primary cause of the universe. The very second *sūtra* offers a clear definition of Brahman which is the object of enquiry as the cause of the origin, sustenance and dissolution of the universe. As we have observed in the earlier chapters, this definition based on the text of the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad,* is adopted as the sole criterion to determine whether other ontological entities referred to in the Upaniṣads can be regarded as the ultimate Reality. Though Śaṁkara regards Brahman defined as the cause of the universe is the lower Brahman or *Īśvara* (God of Religion) endowed with omniscience and omnipotence, Bādarāyaṇa does not acknowledge any such distinction between lower and higher Brahman. According to Bādarāyaṇa, it is the same one Brahman which is characterized as *jagatkāraṇa,* which is the object of enquiry and which is also the goal to be attained by an individual seeking liberation from bondage. The universe which originates from Brahman cannot obviously be illusory, similar to an object of illusion such as rope-snake.

The second *adhyāya* is primarily devoted to reaffirm the main thesis established in the earlier one namely, that Brahman is the sole cause of the universe. This is accomplished by way of refutation of the views of other schools of thought such as Sāṁkhya, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Buddhist and Jain, which do not accept Brahman as the cause of the universe. The Sāṁkhya system comes up for special examination since it upholds *pradhāna* or the primordial cosmic matter as the material cause of the universe. Several *adhikaraṇas* in the first and second *pāda* of the *adhyāya* deal with the subject in all its aspects. In the critical examination of the Sāṁkhya theory, there is no mention of *prakṛti* or any of its evolutes including the five physical elements of which the material universe is constituted, being illusory. According to the Sāṁkhyas, there are only two ultimate ontological entities *Puruṣa* or the Spirit and *prakṛti* or the cosmic matter, both of which are real. Bādarāyaṇa has not, therefore, questioned the reality of the universe as admitted by the Sāṁkhya and other realists. In fact, he has accepted in toto the cosmology of the Sāṁkhya system and the twenty-three evolutes of the *prakṛti*. This is well reflected in the *sūtras* which discuss the ontological status of the evolutes such as *viyat, ap, tejas, ākāśa, pṛthivī* and the *indriyas*. If it were the view of Bādarāyaṇa that the universe is not ultimately real but an illusory manifestation, so much of attention would not have been devoted to the examination of the theories of Sāṁkhya.

In connection with the critical examination of the Sāṁkhya theory of cosmic evolution, an important question is raised: How can Brahman, which is a sentient being can produce the world which is non-sentient? In reply to this objection the Sūtrakāra states that this is possible because it is thus seen (*dṛśyate tu*).[1] Its implication is that in our common experience we have observed that objects of different nature are produced from objects of different character. The illustrations cited by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja in support of it are the insects which spring from cowdung and the hair and nails which grow from animals. In another context intended to explain how Brahman without any accessories can bring forth the variegated universe, Bādarāyaṇa cites two examples. The first one is milk which turns into curds on its own without any extraneous means (*kṣīravaddhi*).[2] The second one refers to the creation of palaces, chariots, etc., by divine beings out of their will power (*devādivadapi loke*).[3] All these illustrations do not in the least imply that objects produced are illusory. It cannot, therefore, be the intention of Bādarāyaṇa to regard the universe as originated from Brahman as an illusory projection of Brahman, like the objects projected by a magician. If that were so, he would not have defined Brahman as the cause of the universe and defended this thesis so vehemently against the Sāṁkhya theory of *pradhāna* as the cause of the universe.

The doctrine of *māyā* is advanced by Advaita Vedānta to account for the illusory character of the universe. *Māyā* which is also known as *avidyā*, is the cosmic principle of illusion postulated by Advaita to explain how Brahman, the one Reality without a second appears as the universe. *Māyā* as the principle of illusion conceals the true nature of Brahman and also projects Brahman as the universe. When Brahman is associated with *māyā* it manifests itself illusorily as the universe. The nature of *māyā* is indescribable (*anirvacanīya*). It is neither real nor unreal but is different from both. It is *sadasadvilakṣaṇa* to use the stock word of the Advaitin. The same is termed as *mithyā* or illusory. The universe which is a product of *māyā* is not real as it is commonly believed. With the realization of the true nature of Brahman, the illusory appearance of Brahman as the universe ceases to exist. The common illustration offered by Śaṁkara to explain this theory is the appearance of the snake in place of the rope. Due to the ignorance of the true nature of the rope the illusion of snake arises. When the true nature of rope is known, the appearance of the snake no longer continues. The same is the case with the illusory manifestation of Brahman as the universe.

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[1] *VS*, II.1.6.
[2] *VS*, II.1.24.
[3] *VS*, II.1.25.

We have to find out whether Bādarāyaṇa admits either directly or indirectly, the theory of *māyā* or *avidyā*. As we have already noticed, Bādarāyaṇa does not mention anywhere in the *Vedāntasūtra* the concept of *vivarta* or illusory manifestation of Brahman as the universe. Even Śaṁkara in his *Bhāṣya* on the *Vedāntasūtra* does not use the expression *vivarta*. Apparently, it is a term which is coined by the post-Śaṁkara Advaitins as against the term *pariṇāma* or modification.[1] In connection with the discussion of the material causality of Brahman, Bādarāyaṇa expressly states that Brahman becomes the universe by means of *pariṇāma* or modification. Whether Brahman itself undergoes actual modification or whether it causes modification through *prakṛti* is a different issue. But in no case the term *pariṇāma* used by the Sūtrakāra allows for *vivarta* or the illusory manifestation of Brahman as the universe.

Some Advaitins equate *māyā* with *prakṛti* and contend that the universe is a product of *māyā*. Since, *māyā* is illusory in character, its product is also illusory. Brahman is the substratum or *adhiṣṭhāna* for *māyā* and hence it is regarded as the material cause of the universe. Does Bādarāyaṇa refer anywhere in *Brahmasūtra* either *māyā* as

[1] See *Saṁkṣepa-śārīraka*, II.61: *Vivarta vādasya hi pūrva bhūmiḥ vedānta vāde pariṇāmavādaḥ.*

conceived by the Advaitin or the theory that *māyā* is the cause of this universe? The term *māyā* appears only in one *sūtra* in the third *adhyāya* in connection with the discussion of the different states of *jīva*. The *sūtra* reads: *māyā-mātram tu kārtsnyena anabhivyaktasvarūpatvāt.*[1] According to Śaṁkara it means that the objects created in the dream state are mere *māyā* or unreal since they do not manifest the character of real objects. The context in which the expression *māyā* is used in this *sūtra* needs to be understood. According to Śaṁkara, the earlier two *sūtras* of this *adhikaraṇa* known as Sandhyādhikaraṇa state on the basis of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* that during the dream state the *jīva* creates the objects of dream experience such as chariots and the like. The question is raised whether such objects created in the dreams are real (*pāramārthika*) as those experienced during waking state. The Sūtrakāra, as interpreted by Śaṁkara, denies reality to the dream objects but regards them as mere *māyā* (*māyāmātra*) since they do not fully manifest the character of the real objects. Rāmānuja takes the word *māyā* in the sense of creation of wondrous things (*āścarya rūpa sṛṣṭi*). He justifies this meaning on the basis of the fact that the objects experienced by *jīva* during dream state are creations by *Īśvara* for the duration of that time to enable the *jīva* to experience the same. Madhva takes the word *māyā* as will (*saṁkalpa*) and *māyāmātram* means as that which is created by the will of God. Whatever may be the meaning of the term, it is definite that according to Sūtrakāra, the word *māyā* is applied to the objects of dream experience. It implies that they do not actually exist as in the case of objects of waking experience but it does not convey the sense of *mithyātva* or illusory character as understood by the Advaitin. However, Śaṁkara in his comment on the subsequent *sūtras* in which dreams are regarded as the portender (*sūcaka*) of the future good or ill-fortune states that in the same manner the objects of the entire universe are *māyā* as established in the Ārambhaṇādhikaraṇa.[2] He further states that there is this difference between the objects of dream and the objects of the universe. The former are sublated (*bādhita*) by the waking state, whereas the latter continue to exist as they are at present until the direct realization of the true nature of Brahman (*prāktu brahmātvatva darśanāt viyadādi prapañco vyavasthita rūpo bhavati; sandhyāśrayastu*

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[1] *VS*, III.2.3.

[2] See *SB*, III.2.4: *Pratipādita hi 'tadanyatvam ārambhaṇa śabdādadibhyaḥ' ityatra saṁsta prapañcasya māyā mātratvam.*

prapañcaḥ pratidinam bādhyata iti).[1] The concept of *bādhyatva* or what is being sublated by right knowledge is adopted as one of the arguments for proving *mithyātva*. But there is no indication in the *Vedāntasūtras* that the universe is sublated by true knowledge of Brahman.

The Advaitins have advanced a few other arguments to prove the *mithyātva* of the universe. The most important one is the inferential argument based on the probans (*hetu*) *dṛśyatvāt* or being the object of cognition. Whatever is cognizable is considered to be illusory. The *sūtras* do not refer to it. Nor does Śaṁkara mention it in his *Sūtrabhāṣya*.

A few Upaniṣadic texts which emphasize the absolute oneness or the unity of the ultimate Reality and the negation of all things other than Brahman are also made use of to prove the *mithyātva* of the universe. But as we have already observed in the earlier chapters, these statements which are implicitly referred to by the *sūtras* as their *viṣayavākyas* do not convey the idea of the illusoriness of the universe. Whether or not the Upaniṣadic texts lend support to this doctrine will be considered separately in chapter 9. Whatever may be the true purport of these texts, Bādarāyaṇa does not seem to take cognizance of these statements as conveying the idea of *mithyātva*. This is evident from the trend of the *sūtras* relating to the nature of the universe.

Thus, the doctrine of *māyā* as conceived by Śaṁkara and the theory of the universe as illusory are not reflected in the *Brahmasūtra*. It is outside the scope of our study to discuss whether or not the doctrine of *avidyā* and the theory of universe as illusory are sound. This is a major controversial issue which is being taken for detailed critical examination both by Rāmānuja and Madhva and also their illustrious followers, Vedānta Deśika and Vyāsatīrtha in the *Śatadūṣaṇī* and *Nyāyāmṛta* respectively. Our main interest is to find out if the *Vedāntasūtra* which is the most important basic manual of Vedānta supports it. Our findings on the basis of an objective evaluation of the relevant *sūtras* lead to a negative conclusion. Dr. Thibaut and a few other impartial scholars have also come to the same conclusion.

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[1] *SB*, III.2.4.

Chapter 6

The Doctrine of Jīva

Bādarāyaṇa presents a fairly detailed account of the doctrine of *jīva* or the individual self. This is embodied in a large number of *sūtras* in different contexts. He first brings up the subject in the very first *adhyāya* in connection with the discussion of the nature of Brahman with particular reference to the *jīvātman*. Most of the *adhikaraṇas*, while examining the Upaniṣadic texts connected with the *sūtras*, raise the question whether the subject-matter of the texts refers to the *jīvātman* or *Paramātman* and in this connection the theory of *jīva* is discussed as a prima facie view with supporting arguments. There are several *sūtras* in which Bādarāyaṇa himself mentions that *jīva* is separate from Brahman. In the subsequent *adhyāyas*, he directly discusses the nature of *jīva*, the theory of its transmigration and its conditions in the states of waking, dream, deep sleep and swoon. In the final *adhyāya*, he examines the status of *jīva* in the state of *mokṣa* after it is totally liberated from bondage. He also devotes some attention to the major controversial issue regarding the relation of *jīva* to Brahman. We shall discuss these topics in the present chapter to determine the views of Bādarāyaṇa on the theory of *jīva*.

JĪVA AS ETERNAL

The first important point which is highlighted in the *Vedāntasūtra* regarding the nature of *jīva* is that it is *nitya* or eternal. That is, *jīva* is not subject to either origin or destruction, unlike the other physical evolutes such as *viyat* or ether and *tejas* or fire. The cryptic *sūtra* reads: *na ātmā aśruteśca nityatvācca tābhyaḥ.*[1] Taking into consideration the context in which this *sūtra* is introduced by Bādarāyaṇa, it is obvious that the term *ātmā* here refers to the *jīvātman*. Both Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja agree on this meaning. Madhva takes it in its primary sense as Brahman. The word *ātmā* along with negative particle *na* (*na ātmā*) implies that it is not subject to origin (*utpatti*), unlike *viyat* and other evolutes which are considered in the earlier *adhikaraṇas.* The reasons for holding this view are provided in the next words of the *sūtra,* viz., *aśruteḥ nityatvāt. Aśruteḥ,* according to Śaṁkara, means that there is no mention of the origin of *jīva* any where in the scripture that speaks of the origin of the entities. Rāmānuja reads the word *aśruteḥ* as *śruteḥ* and explains it in the sense that the scriptural texts deny the origin of *jīva.* The words *nityatvācca tābhyaḥ* mean that the very scriptural texts declare that *jīva* is eternal. In this connection both Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja quote several Upaniṣadic texts which explicitly state that *jīva* is not subject to either origin or destruction. Thus states the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad: ajo nityaḥ śāśvato'yam purāṇaḥ,* "Unborn, eternal, everlasting, existing from time immemorial." This in brief is the import of the *sūtra,* as interpreted by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja.

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[1] *VS*, II.3.17.

Madhva takes the word *ātmā* in its primary sense as denoting Brahman and interprets the words *na ātmā* to mean that Brahman is not subject to *laya* or dissolution for the reason that there is no evidence in the scripture to support the merger of Brahman in anything. This is the implication of the word *aśruteḥ* according to Madhva.

If we go by the wording of the *sūtra,* the meaning of which is not ambiguous, along with Upaniṣadic texts in support of it, it is obvious that according ot Bādarāyaṇa *jīva* is eternal (*nitya*) and that it is not subject to origin. Though Madhva interprets the present *sūtra* in favour of Brahman as devoid of *laya,* he admits in his comment on the subsequent *sūtra* (*jño ata eva*) that *jīva* is indestructible.

Though the above view of Bādarāyaṇa as can be made out from the *sūtra* cannot be questioned, the commentators have advanced divergent explanations regarding the manner in which *nityatva* of *jīva* is to be understood. This problem arises because certain Upaniṣadic statements give the impression that *jīvas* too like material entities have their origin in Brahman. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* states that like sparks from the fire all the *prāṇas* (living souls) emerge from Brahman. The same passage also mentions that all these *ātmans* emerge from it (*sarva eva ātmāno vyuccarante*). The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* says: "From whence these beings are produced." Besides, the general declaration of the *Chāndogya* that the knowledge of the one principle (Brahman) leads to the knowledge of all else would not be justified if *jīvas* too were not the products of Brahman. On the basis of these facts the prima facie view is advanced asserting the origin of the *jīva*.

The Sūtrakāra, as interpreted by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, refutes this objection and affirms that the *jīvātman* is *nitya* on the strength of the scriptural texts. However, the objections raised by the *pūrvapakṣa* need to be answered satisfactorily in order to prove the eternal character of *jīva*. The commentators have attempted to meet these objections but the explanations offered by them differ due to the different metaphysical position maintained by them. Without going into the exegetical details we may briefly take note of their views. According to Śaṁkara, *jīva* is in reality identical with Brahman and as such it is coeternal with it. What originates is merely the soul's association with its limiting adjuncts. In other words, *jīva* is Brahman as conditioned by the limiting adjuncts which are illusory being caused by *avidyā* and hence it is *nitya*. According to Rāmānuja, the *jīva* is different from Brahman but it has existed in Brahman from eternity as an individual being and as a mode (*prakāra*) of Brahman. So also all the material elements exist in Brahman as modes of Brahman. As Brahman is the cause of the universe consisting of both sentient souls and non-sentient entities, souls have to be admitted as caused by Brahman. Nevertheless the *jīvas* are not produced in the same sense as the material objects are brought into existence. There is an important distinction between the two owing to which the meterial entities are said to originate at the time of creation, whereas the same cannot be said of *jīvas*. Prior to the creation the material entities exist in Brahman in a subtle condition devoid of name and form and after creation they assume a gross state and are given name and form. In this process their very *svarūpa* undergoes complete transformation and as such they are considered to have been originated. This is not the case with the *jīvas*. The *jīvas* which exist in Brahman all the time possess the essential intrinsic qualities such as *jñāna* and *ānanda*. Whenever a new creation takes place, they become associated with the bodies and sense organs to enable them to function and reap the benefits of *karma*. The only change that takes place in the *jīvas* after the creation is the expansion and contraction of their attributive knowledge which was dormant during the state of *pralaya*. But there is no change in its *svarūpa* (*svarūpānyathābhāva*) unlike in the case of non-sentient entities. In view of this, though the *jīvas* have their origin in Brahman, they are *nitya* or eternal since they exist for ever in Brahman both prior to creation and even thereafter. This is the explanation offered by Rāmānuja to uphold the *nityatva* of *jīva* as declared by the Upaniṣads on the basis of his theory of Brahman as always associated with *cit* and *acit* (*cid-acid-viśiṣṭa Brahma*).

According to Madhva, the *jīvas* have their origin in Brahman. They emerge from it in the same way as the sparks emerge from the fire. But they are eternal, since the scriptural texts declare that they are indestructible. While commenting the *sūtra, jño'ta eva,*[1] Madhva states categorically that the *jīvātman* too has genesis from Brahman only (*ata eva*) because there is Śruti to that effect (*śabdāt*). He quotes in support of it a Śruti text which is not extant and which reads as follows: "All these intelligent beings as indestructible selves enter into the Supreme Light of Brahman and as indestructible beings, they are born from it. They never have dissolution."[2]

Thus, we have three different explanations regarding the *nityatva* of *jīva*. Whatever may be the merits of these explanations, it may be noted for our purpose that Bādarāyaṇa states categorically in the present *sūtra* under our consideration that *jīvātman* is *nitya*, unlike the *viyat* or ether since it is supported by the Upaniṣadic texts.

JĪVA AS JÑĀTĀ

After stating that *jīvātman* is *nitya*, Bādarāyaṇa describes its *svarūpa* or essential nature in terms of *jñaḥ*. Thus says the *sūtra, jño'ta eva*. It is expressed in such an ambiguous word that it has allowed more than one interpretation. According to Śaṁkara the word *jñaḥ* means knowledge or consciousness only. Accordingly, *jīva* is essentially of the nature of eternal consciousness (*nitya caitanya ayam ātmā*). The Vaiśeṣikas regard knowledge as an adventitious property of *jīva*. The Sūtrakāra, according to Śaṁkara's interpretation, rejects this view and affirms that knowledge is the very *svarūpa* of *jīva*. In view of this, it is not originated. Elucidating this point, Śaṁkara points out that the very Brahman which is not subject to any modification, assumes the form of *jīva* due to the limiting adjuncts caused by *avidyā* (*yasmādeva na utpadyate parameva brahma avikṛtam upādhi-samparkāt jīva-bhāvena avatiṣṭhate*). This is the implication of the words *ata eva* in the *sūtra*. The Upaniṣadic texts describe Brahman as *vijñāna* and *ānanda* (*vijñānam ānandam brahma*), *jīva* too which is the same as Brahman is essentially of the nature of knowledge.

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[1] *VS*, II.3.18.

[2] *Te eva cidātmāno avinaṣṭāḥ param jyotir niviśanti; avinaṣṭa eva utpadyante na vinaśyanti kadācana.*

Rāmānuja interprets the word *jñaḥ* in a different way. He means by it *jñātā* or knower. *Jīva* is not mere knowledge as Saugata (Buddhists) and Kapila (Sāṁkhyas) maintain. Nor it is the non-intelligent entity with knowledge as its adventitious property, as Vaiśeṣikas believe. It is, on the contrary, a knowing subject (*jñātā*). According to Rāmānuja, knowership or *jñātṛtva* is its essential nature (*jñātṛtvameva asya svarūpam*). The reason for holding this view is that it is stated so in the scriptural texts. Thus says the *Praśna Upaniṣad*: "He is the knower (*draṣṭā*), the hearer, the smeller, the taster, the perceiver, the thinker, the agent, etc."[1] Rāmānuja quotes a few other texts in support of this interpretation. He is, therefore, of the view that Sūtrakāra affirms that *jīva* is a knowing subject (*jñātā*).

Madhva offers an altogether different interpretation. By postulating a *pūrvapakṣa* in favour of *jīva* not having an origin (*utpatti*) similar to *Īśvara* on the basis of its being beginningless, he interprets the *sūtra* to mean that *jīvātman* too has a genesis from Brahman only because of the scriptural text to that effect (*jīvo'pi ata eva parameśvarād utpadyate śabdād eva*). The scriptural text which he quotes in support of it, to which we have referred earlier, states that *jīvas* which originate from Brahman are indestructible. The word *jñaḥ* in the *sūtra* is taken by him in the sense of *jīvātman* on the basis of a grammatical rule.[2] In his opinion the Sūtrakāra intends to explain the genesis of *jīva* from Brahman instead of its essential nature, as Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja have understood.

Whatever may be the merit of Madhva's interpretation, it is not certain if Bādarāyaṇa intended to convey in the present *sūtra* the idea of the genesis of *jīva* from Brahman since he has already expressed in the preceding *sūtra* that *Ātman* (meaning *jīvātman* with reference to the context of the earlier *adhikaraṇas*) is *nitya*. As both Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja have rightly observed, the present *sūtra* is primarily intended to bring out the *svarūpa* of *jīva*. The word *jñaḥ* may imply either *jñāna-svarūpa*, as Śaṁkara says, or *jñātṛ-svarūpa*, as Rāmānuja states. If *jīva* is identical with Brahman, as Śaṁkara contends, his interpretation would be sustainable. But as will be observed later, Bādarāyaṇa is of the view that *jīva* and Brahman are different. In one of the *sūtras* he explicitly states that Brahman is different from *jīva.*[1] Further the Upaniṣads speak of *jīva* as *boddhā* and *vijñāta.* It also describes it as *jñāna-svarūpa* (*vijñāna* and *prajñāna ghana eva*). *Jīva* as *jñāna-svarūpa* can also possess *jñāna* as its essential *dharma. Jīvātman* as the substrate of *jñāna* is regarded as *Jñātā* or the knowing subject. In view of this explanation, as offered by Rāmānuja, it is reasonable to assume that according to Bādarāyaṇa, *jīva* is *jñaḥ* in the sense of *jñātṛ* or knowing subject.

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[1] *Praśna Up.*, V.9: *Eṣa hi draṣṭā śrotā ghrātā rasayitā mantā boddhā vijñānātma puruṣaḥ.*

[2] Pāṇini, *sūtra* III.1.35: *Igupadhjñaprikara, jānātīti jñaḥ jīvaḥ.*

JĪVA AS AṆU

Continuing the discussion regarding the nature of *jīva,* Bādarāyaṇa brings out another important point relating to the size (*parimāṇa*) of *jīva* and certain allied matters. This is presented in a group of nearly twenty-four *sūtras.* According to *Śaṁkara Bhāṣya,* all these *sūtras* are grouped under one broad *adhikaraṇa* titled as Utkrāntigatyadhikaraṇa.[2] Rāmānuja treats all these *sūtras* as part of the *adhikaraṇa* known as Jñādhikaraṇa. Madhva as usual has his own way of grouping these *sūtras* under five different *adhikaraṇas.* Though the *adhikaraṇas* are named by him differently, they all deal with various aspects of *jīva.*

The first important issue that comes up for consideration is whether *jīva* is *aṇu* (atomic) in size or *vibhu* (all-pervasive). This doubt arises because we come across in the Upaniṣads description of movement of *jīva* after its exit from the body and also as all-pervasive (*sarvagata*). Bādarāyaṇa resolves the doubt by affirming that the soul is atomic in size and not *vibhu.* He has expressed this view in categorical terms in several *sūtras* with sufficient arguments and also by setting aside the possible objections against the theory. Both Rāmānuja and Madhva are agreed on this point. Śaṁkara, on the contrary, in his comments on the first ten *sūtras* of this *adhikaraṇa,* accepts the position as expressed in these *sūtras,* viz., that the soul is atomic but later on in his comments on a subsequent *sūtra* takes a strange view that Bādarāyaṇa rejects it as being a *pūrvapakṣa* and that the final view (*siddhānta*) of the Sūtrakāra is that the soul in reality is *vibhu* and not atomic. This interpretation of Śaṁkara makes it difficult to assess the correct view of Bādarāyaṇa regarding the size of the individual soul. Before we make our observation on this controversial point we may briefly go over the relevant *sūtras* related to this subject.

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[1] *VS,* II.1.22: *Adhikaṁ tu bheda nirdeśāt.*

[2] *VS,* II.3.19-32.

The first *sūtra* on the subject reads *utkrānti-gaty-āgatīnām. Utkrānti* means exit or departure of the soul from the body; *gati* means movement from this world to another realm and *āgati* means coming back from another realm to this world. The scriptural texts speak of such movements of the self. This would not be possible if the selves were *vibhu*. Hence, it follows that it is *aṇu*. This is the first argument in support of the atomic size of the soul and all the commentators are agreed on this explanation.

The next *sūtra* reads *svātmanā ca uttarayoḥ*. It means that it may be possible to explain the *utkrānti* even with a non-moving body but it is not possible to account for the other two activities, viz., *gati* or the movement to another world and *āgati* or return from another world without the soul being associated with such movements.

In the next *sūtra* Bādarāyaṇa himself raises an objection against the main thesis and answers it. It reads: *na aṇuḥ atat śruteḥ iti cet na adhikārāt.* The objection is that the self is not *aṇu* because the scriptural statements describe it as great (*mahān*). In another place it is stated that like ether it is omnipresent. This objection is replied to by stating that the subject-matter of these Upaniṣadic texts relate to Brahman.

The subsequent *sūtra* is more specific in pointing out that the very scriptural text describes the soul in terms of *aṇu* and *unmāna* (having dimension). *Muṇḍaka* text which is quoted both by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja states: "This *Ātman* which is *aṇu* is to be known through mind."[1] The term *unmāna* refers to the measurement by the selection of comparative instances (according to *RB*). Thus says the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*: "The individual self is to be known as part of the hundredth part of the tip of a hair divided a hundred times." The same Upaniṣad also says: "The lower one (Individual self) is seen of the measure of the tip of the goad."[2]

If the soul were atomic, how can it experience sensation all over the body? The Sūtrakāra himself answers this in another *sūtra* by pointing out that there is no difficulty in an atomic soul being able to experience sensation all over the body through the sense of touch, like a drop of sandal paste which causes pleasant sensation

[1] *M. Up.*, III.1.9: *Eṣonurātmā cetaṣā veditavyaḥ.*

[2] *Śv. Up.*, V.8: *Ārāgramātro hy-avaro'pidṛṣṭaḥ.*

all over the body, though itself is applied to one particular place of the body.[1]

The next *sūtra* rejects the minor objection that there is no parallelism between the two cases of sandal paste and *jīvātman*, since the latter unlike the former does not actually abide in one particular spot in the body. The *sūtra* in reply points out that the self abides in the heart (*hṛdi*), as stated in several scriptural texts.[2]

Bādarāyaṇa offers another explanation to prove how an atomic soul can have experience throughout the body by citing the example of light. A light placed in a corner of the room lights up the whole place. The soul also similarly pervades the body through its quality of knowledge (*guṇādvā lokavat*).[3]

The subsequent two *sūtras* point out that the *guṇa* or quality is distinct from the substance in which it inheres, like the odour in sandal paste (*vyatireko gandhavat*).[4] According to Śaṁkara's explanation, knowledge as a quality can extend beyond the soul, like the smell that spreads beyond the substance. Rāmānuja takes the word *vyatireka* as distinction and explains that the knowledge as a quality is different from the knowing subject (*jīva*) in the same way as *gandha* or odour is distinct from earth. Both these explanations are claimed to have the support of the Upaniṣadic texts as stated in the *sūtra* (*tathā ca darśayati*) Bādarāyaṇa also points out that the Upaniṣads also teach explicitly that knowledge is distinct from the self (*pṛthag-upadeśāt*).[5]

All the ten *sūtras* point out without any shadow of doubt that the soul is *aṇu* and not *vibhu*. There is no difference of opinion between Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja regarding the general import of these *sūtras*. According to Madhva, only seven *sūtras* cover the subject of the size of the soul. He, however, does not disagree with the general conclusion of Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, though he offers slightly different interpretation on some of these *sūtras*.

After establishing that *jīva* is atomic in size (*aṇu*) on the basis of ten *sūtras* with well supported arguments, Śaṁkara brings up the theory that *jīva* is *vibhu* or infinite in his comment on the next four

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[1] *VS*, II.3.23: *Avirodhaḥ candanavat.*

[2] See *Praśna Up.*, III.6: *Hṛdi hy eṣa ātmā.* See also *Ch. Up.*,VIII.3.3: *Sa vā eṣa ātmā hṛdi.*

[3] *SB*, II.3.25 (26 acc. *RB*).

[4] *VS*, II.3.26 acc. *SB*; II.3.27 acc. *RB*.

[5] *VS*, II.3.28.

sutras of the *adhikaraṇa.* In his opinion all that has been stated earlier in the ten *sutras* about the *jīva*'s *aṇutva* represents the prima facie view (*purvapakṣa*) and it is not correct to say that *jīva* is *aṇu* (*naitadasti aṇurātmeti*). The main argument advanced in favour of this view is that Brahman itself is *jīva* (*parameva brahma jīva*) and that Brahman being *vibhu*, as declared in the Śruti, *jīva* too is *vibhu.* Though this explanation may be justified according to Śaṁkara's metaphysical doctrine of identity of *jīva* and Brahman, we have to examine whether or not Bādarāyaṇa reflects this view in these four *sūtras* of this *adhikaraṇa.*

The *sūtra* which is interpreted by Śaṁkara in favour of the theory of *vibhutva* of *jīva* reads as follows: *tad-guṇa sāratvāt-tu tad-vyapadeśaḥ prājñavat.*[1] The general meaning of this *sūtra*, according to Śaṁkara, is that the soul is regarded as atomic (*tadvyapadeśaḥ*) on account of the soul having for its essence, the qualities of *buddhi* (*tadguṇa*) as in the case of the intelligent Lord. The fuller implication is brought out by Śaṁkara by further elucidation of the *sūtra.* The word *tat* or 'that' means *buddhi* or internal organ. The qualities of the *buddhi* are desire, aversion, pleasure, pain, suffering, etc. These qualities constitute the essential traits of the soul during its state of bondage (*saṁsāra*). In other words, the qualities of *buddhi* are ascribed to the soul during its state of bondage. Without the association of the qualities of *buddhi*, the pure self cannot have the experience of bondage (*na hi buddheḥ guṇairvinā kevalasya ātmanaḥ saṁsāritvam*). Because of these limiting adjuncts in the form of the qualities of *buddhi*, the soul is also spoken to possess the dimension such as atomic size etc. (*evam upādhiguṇa sāratvāt jīvasya aṇutvādi vyapadeśaḥ*). This is illustrated by the term *prājñavat* or omniscient Lord. Just as Brahman which is pure knowledge is sometimes described in terms of *aṇīyān* or infinitesimally small or as *manomaya* or consisting of mind, *jīva* too is spoken as *aṇu.* This in brief is the import of the *sūtra.*

The next three *sūtras* are interpreted by Śaṁkara on the same assumption, viz., that there is a conjunction between *buddhi* and the self and on this basis, certain objections are answered. The first objection is that if *buddhi* and soul are conjoined together, the two being different entities, this association must come to an end sometime. In that case the soul disjoined from *buddhi* will either cease to be or at least cease to be a transmigrating self. The reply to this is expressed in the *sūtra* which reads: *yāvadātmabhāvitvācca na doṣaḥ taddarśanāt.*[1] It means according to Śaṁkara's interpretation that such a contingency does not arise because *buddhi* exists as long as the soul exists (*yavadàtmabhàvi*). This fact is well established by scriptural texts (*taddarśanāt*).

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[1] *VS*, II.3.29.

The next objection is that it cannot be maintained that the conjunction of the soul with *budhhi* lasts as long as the self (exists) because during the state of deep sleep and *pralaya* or dissolution no connection can be established between the soul and *buddhi.* The answer is provided in the *sūtra* which reads as: *puṃstvādivattu asya sato abhivyaktiyogāt.*[2] It means, according to Śaṁkara's interpretation, that as the virile power which exists in a potential state in childhood becomes manifest in adolescence, the connection with *buddhi* which exists in *suṣupti* and *pralaya* in its potential form, becomes manifest in the waking state or after the period of creation.

The last *sūtra* points out that if such a contact of the soul with *buddhi* is not admitted, there would be either awareness at all times or non-awareness at all times or else the limitation of power of either of the two, the soul or the senses (*nitya upalabdhi aṇupalabdhi prasaṅga anyataru niyamo va anyathà*).[3]

Before we make our observation whether Bādarāyaṇa conveys these ideas in these *sūtras,* we shall first take note of the comments of Rāmānuja and Madhva. Rāmānuja interprets these *sūtras* in a straightforward manner by adhering faithfully to the words of the *sūtras.* The entire group of these fourteen *sūtras* (II.3.19-32) constitute one *adhikaraṇa* relating to the subject of the *svarūpa* of *jīva* as *jñātṛ* or knower and as atomic in character (*aṇutva*). All the fourteen *sūtras* establish that the soul is *aṇu* and not *vibhu.* While the first ten *sūtras* have direct bearing on the subject, the rest affirm the same thesis by providing additional explanation by way of answering the possible objections. One of the objections is how an atomic soul can experience sensation all over the body? Two explanations are offered. The first one relates to the illustration of the sandal paste. Though the sandal paste is located in one place of the body, it can cause pleasant feeling all over the body. The second one cited is that the light which is located in one spot can illuminate a much larger area around it. In the same way the atomic self located in the heart can have experience all over the body through knowledge which is its quality, as the *sūtra* indicates by the words *guṇādvā ālokavat.* This explanation presupposes the acceptance of difference between substance and its quality. In other words, it implies that the knowledge as a quality or attribute of *jīva* is distinct from the atomic soul. In order to substantiate this, the *sūtra* states that a quality is different from the substance as in the case of earth and the odour which is its quality (*vyatireko gandhavat*). This explanation is also supported by the scriptural text as pointed out by Bādarāyaṇa (*tathā ca darśayati*). In the next *sūtra* which reads as *pṛthagupadeśāt,* it is stated that scriptural texts too point out directly that knowledge is distinct from the soul. Upto this point there is general agreement between Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja.

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[1] *VS,* II.3.30.

[2] *VS,* II.3.31.

[3] *VS,* II.3.32.

In this context, the question is raised by Rāmānuja as a possible objection of the prima facie view, viz., whether *jīvātman* which is mere knowledge, as stated in the scriptural texts can also be the knower (*jñātā*). Thus says *Taittirīya Upaniṣad:* Brahman is knowledge (*jñānam,* Brahma). Another text says: *jñānasvarūpam atyantaṁ amalaṁ,* etc. which means '(the self) having knowledge as its nature and absolutely pure etc.'

This is an important issue from the epistemological point of view. If the self is knowledge, as some maintain, how can it be the *jñātṛ* or knower in the sense of being the substrate for knowledge as a *guṇa.* This needs to be explained. For this purpose Bādarāyaṇa, in the opinion of Rāmānuja, states in the *sūtra* that the designation of the *jīvātman* as knowledge is plausible because it possesses knowledge as its essential quality or *guṇa.* This is the implication of the words in the *sūtra, tadguṇa sāratvāt tadvyapadeśaḥ.* It means that the self is designated as *vijñāna* or knowledge because it has that quality as its essential nature (*tad-guṇa sāratvāt*). This is explained by the term *prājñavat. Prājña* means the omniscient highest Self or Brahman. Brahman is also designated in the Upaniṣad as *jñāna*[1] because knowledge is its essential quality. In the same way Brahman is also designated as *ānanda* because *ānanda* or bliss is its essential quality.

Against such an explanation of the *sūtra* by Rāmānuja, as explicitly implied in the words of the *sūtra,* the interpretation offered by Śaṁkara by the introduction of the concept of *buddhi* or internal organ as a limiting adjunct (*upādhi*) to explain the theory of *jīva* as *aṇu*, appears to be somewhat out of place, except for the purpose of justifying the theory of identity of the *jīva* and Brahman. If Bādarāyaṇa had admitted the identity theory either in this *adhikaraṇa* or elsewhere in the *Vedāntasūtra*, we can concede to Śaṁkara's explanation of the *sūtra*. But as will be seen later, it is not so.

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[1] *Tait. Up.: Satyaṁ jñānam anantaṁ brahma.*

Madhva offers a different interpretation on this crucial *sūtra* (*tadguṇasāratvāt*...). The preceding *sūtra* which reads as: *pṛthag-upadeśāt* is taken along with it and the two together are treated as one *adhikaraṇa* known as Pṛthagadhikaraṇa. The purpose of these two *sūtras* in the opinion of Madhva is to resolve the conflict of testimony regarding *jīva*'s relation to Brahman and reconcile the conflicting Upaniṣadic statements speaking of identity (*abheda*) as well as absolute difference (*bheda*) between *jīva* and Brahman. The *sūtra*, *pṛthagupadeśāt* is to be read as *jñaḥ svātmanā pṛthageva upadeśaḥ*, by importing two additional terms expressed in the earlier *sūtras*, viz., *jña* and *svātmanā*. It means that the *jīvātman* is indeed different from the independent ruling Self because of the scriptural teaching establishing their difference on irrefutable grounds. The next *sūtra*, *tadguṇasāratvāt tadvyapadeśaḥ* is intended to account for the *abheda* Śrutis or identity texts. The identity texts, according to Madhva, refer to the *jīva* as identical with Brahman not in the literal sense of oneness of essence with Brahman (*svarūpaikya*) but only (*tu*) in the sense of likeness of some essential properties, because the *jīva* has for its essence such properties as intelligence and bliss which resemble those of Brahman.[1] *Tadvyapadeśaḥ* or the reference to *jīva* as Brahman is to be understood in the same way as the reference to the omniscient one (*prājñavat*).

We need not dispute with Madhva's explanation for which he has his own justification. However, it is doubtful if in the context of all the preceding ten *sūtras* which are mainly devoted to discuss the nature of *jīva* and its *aṇutva*, whether Bādarāyaṇa brings up the question of the theory of the relation of *jīva* to Brahman as *bheda* or *abheda* and whether an attempt is made through these *sūtras* to reconcile *bheda* Śrutis and *abheda* Śrutis. As we will presently see, this point is covered in the *sūtra* referring to *jīva* as *aṁśa* of Brahman (II.3.43).

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[1] See *MSB*, II.3.29: *Jñānāndādi brahma guṇaḥ eva asya yataḥ śāraḥ svarūpam, ato abheda vyapadeśuḥ.*

Against three conflicting interpretations of the crucial *sūtras* on the nature of *jīva*, it certainly becomes hard to determine the view of Bādarāyaṇa on this subject. However, on the basis of our objective evaluation it may be observed that Bādarāyaṇa is in favour of admitting *jīva* as *jñātā* or knower and also as *aṇu*.

JĪVA AS KARTĀ

One other important *dharma* regarding *jīva* which is brought out explicitly by Bādarāyaṇa is that it is *kartā* or the agent of action. The *sūtra* states: *kartā śāstrārthavatvāt,*[1] which means that *jīva* is the agent of action on account of scripture becoming meaningful. There are several scriptural injunctions in the form of commanding an individual to perform good deeds for attaining heaven and also prohibiting him from doing evil deeds. All these *śāstraic* injunctions would be rendered meaningless if an individual soul were not the agent of action. The Vedic commands have no meaning in respect of a non-sentient entity. They are intended only for those who can understand and follow them. In view of this, it is maintained that *jīva* is *kartā*. This is the fuller implication of the *sūtra* as accepted by all the commentators. Bādarāyaṇa advances additional arguments in the subsequent six *sūtras* to confirm this theory.

Śaṁkara, however, in his comment in a subsequent *sūtra* which is treated as a separate *adhikaraṇa*, known as Takṣādhikaraṇa, brings up the issue whether *kartṛtva* or doership constitutes the intrinsic nature of *jīva* (*svābhāvikam*) or it is its adventitious property caused by the *upādhi* or limiting adjuncts (*upādhinimittam*). He takes the view that *kartṛtva* is not the intrinsic nature of *jīva* and if that were so, there would be no *mokṣa* or liberation for *jīva* (*anirmokṣa prasaṅgaḥ*). He argues in detail by answering all possible objections against this view and comes to the conclusion that *kartṛtva* is an adventitious property caused by superimposition of the *dharmas* of the *upādhi* or limiting adjuncts.[2] The internal organ is the limiting adjunct and its *dharmas* are superimposed on *jīva*. In reality *jīva* which is the very Brahman is neither the *kartā* (doer) nor the *bhoktā* (enjoyer). The scriptural texts, which describe *jīva* as *kartā, jñātā, bhoktā,* etc.[3] are to be understood as referring to the conditioned soul and not to the true self which is eternally pure and free from all empirical activities. The illustration of the carpenter (*takṣa*) cited in the *sūtra* is interpreted by Śaṁkara in favour of his theory. The carpenter functions as the agent of action only with the use of tools and other accessories. In the absence of these, he remains free from activity and rests happily. In the same way the *jīva* functions as an agent of action only when associated with other organs caused by *avidyā*, but when it becomes one with Brahman, it ceases to be a *kartā*. This is the implication of the *sūtra, yathā ca takṣobhayathā.*[1]

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[1] *VS,* II.3.33.

[2] *SB,* II.3.33: *Upādhi-dharma adhyāsenaiva ātamanaḥ kartṛtvam, na svābhāvikam.*

[3] *Praśna Up.,* V.9: *Eṣa hi draṣṭā śrotā mantā boddhā kartā vijñānatmā puruṣaḥ.*

Rāmānuja and Madhva interpret this *sūtra* in a different way. This illustration is taken to explain what has already been said in the earlier *sūtras*. In the preceding *sūtras* it is argued out that *buddhi* or internal organ cannot serve as an agent of action. At this stage a possible objection is raised. If *jīvātman* is admitted as *kartā*, then *kartṛtva* would persist (not cease) at all times. In reply to this objection, the Sūtrakāra introduces the *sūtra* by citing the example of the carpenter. According to the explanation provided by Rāmānuja, *jīva* which is endowed with organs of speech and other instruments of action acts as and when it wishes to do so and does not function when it does not wish to do so. Though a carpenter is furnished with his axe and other instruments he may work or not as he pleases. If the non-sentient *buddhi* were the agent of action, it would always be functioning, since there are no other influencing factors to control it.

Madhva too offers a similar explanation. According to him, the word *yathā* implies clearly that it is an illustration offered to support the arguments advanced in the earlier *sūtras*. Accordingly, the present *sūtra* is a part of the earlier *adhikaraṇa* dealing with the *kartṛtva* of *jīva* and there is no justification to treat it as a separate one to deal with any new topic as conceived by Śaṁkara.

Against these divergent and conflicting explanations of the *sūtras* we have to assess the view of Bādarāyaṇa on this subject. Śaṁkara may be justified in offering an explanation to deny the *kartṛtva* to *jīva* as its essential character since it is in consonance with his metaphysical theory of identity of *jīva* and Brahman. But the Sūtrakāra is not in favour of it and hence it cannot be admitted that Śaṁkara's view is reflected in these *sūtras*. It is categorically stated in the *sūtra* that *jīva* is *kartā*. The Śruti also declares that *jīva* is *kartā*.[2] This is further confirmed in the subsequent *sūtras* that *buddhi* cannot be *kartā* and that it is the intrinsic property of *jīva*. The word *yathā* used in this disputed *sūtra* containing the illustration of *takṣa* or carpenter, cannot be construed as an alternative view to what has already been said. In view of all these considerations it is obvious that Bādarāyaṇa upholds the theory that *jīva* is *kartā* in the proper sense of the term, as both Rāmānuja and Madhva emphasize.

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[1] *VS*, II.3.40.

[2] See *supra*, p.100, n. 3.

In connection with the *kartṛtva* of *jīva* the question is raised whether *jīva* acts on its own independently or its activity is dependent on *Paramātman*. The prima facie view is that *jīva* is totally free to act on its own without depending on *Īśvara*. The Sūtrakāra rejects this view and affirms that *jīva*'s activity is prompted by *Īśvara*, since it is so declared in the scripture. The *sūtra* states: *parāt tu tatśruteḥ.*[1] The word *tu* is used to distinguish Bādarāyaṇa's view from that of the *pūrvapakṣa*. *Parat* means from the highest Self or *Paramātman*. According to Śaṁkara, it implies that *Īśvara* or the Supreme Being impells it to act (*Īśvara tad-aṇujñayā siddhiḥ*). The bondage of *jīva* as well as its liberation are all caused by *Īśvara*. Rāmānuja explains the word *parāt* to mean that the activity of *jīva* takes place on account of *Paramātman* (*kartṛtvam asya jīvasya Paramātmanā eva hetoḥ bhavati*). Madhva interprets this word to mean that God has implanted this power to act in the *jīvātman* and it is in that sense that such power is intrinsic to it. Though there may be a slight variation in the explanation of the word *parāt*, it is obvious that according to Bādarāyaṇa, *jīva*'s *kartṛtva* is prompted by *Paramātman*. Though divine influence or intervention is admitted in respect of *jīva*'s *kartṛtva*, Bādarāyaṇa clarifies that god's will operates in accordance with the effort made by an individual in accordance with his former actions (*kṛta prayatnāpekṣastu*) so that the injunctions and prohibitions of the *śāstra* are not rendered futile. This also absolves God of the criticism of cruelty or partiality. This relates to the ethical question of freedom of the soul versus determinism. The commentators on the *sūtra* have offered detailed explanations regarding the fuller implications of this theory. These details are not of relevance for our purpose. It would suffice to note that according to Bādarāyaṇa, *jīva* as a *kartā* is prompted to act by God, who is the Inner Controller, in accordance with the past *karma* of the individual.

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[1] *VS*, II.3.41.

THE RELATION OF JĪVA TO BRAHMAN

In outlining the nature of *jīva*, as expressed in the *sūtras*, Śaṁkara in his comments brings up often the subject of *jīva*'s identity with Brahman. Following his metaphysical position, he states explicitly that *jīva* is not different from Brahman and it is in reality Brahman only as conditioned by *upādhi* or limiting adjuncts caused by *avidyā*, the cosmic principle of illusion. Both Rāmānuja and Madhva do not accept this view. According to them, *jīva* is different from Brahman. This raises a fundamental issue which has become the subject of great controversy in the Vedānta. The main question is whether *jīva* and Brahman are non-different or different as two distinct realities. We are not concerned here with the relative merits of these two theories but to find out what particular theory Bādarāyaṇa has adumbrated in the *sūtras*.

The admission of *jīva* as a separate ontological entity as distinct from Brahman is not questioned seriously by Bādarāyaṇa. As we have observed in the earlier chapters, most of the *adhikaraṇas* of the first *adhyāya* of *Vedāntasūtra* assume in a general way difference between *jīva* and Brahman. In examining the import of these *sūtras* with particular reference to the Upaniṣadic texts which constitute their *viṣaya-vākya*, the commentators including Śaṁkara have raised the issue whether the subject-matter is related to *jīvātman* or *Paramātman*. The prima facie view is advanced in favour of *jīvātman*. In all these *adhikaraṇas*, while critically examining the prima facie views relating to the terms such as *ānandamaya, hiraṇmaya Puruṣa, akṣi Puruṣa, indraprāṇa, manomaya, attā, antaryāmi, adṛśyatvādi guṇaka, vaiśvānara, āyatana, bhūmā, akṣara,* and *daharākāśa* it is pointed out that they do not denote *jīvātman* but only *Paramātman*. All these discussions thus presuppose the admission of two separate ontological entities namely *jīva* and Brahman. Besides, Bādarāyaṇa himself mentions categorically in several *sūtras* that Brahman is distinct from *jīva*. Thus in the Ānandamayādhikaraṇa, the *sūtra* states that *jīva* is not *ānandamaya* because it is untenable.[1] The next *sūtra* on the same topic points out, since the Upaniṣad itself declares the difference between the two, the two are not the same (*bheda vyapadeśācca*).[2] In the Antaradhikaraṇa which refers to the *Puruṣa* or the Self dwelling in the *āditya* (sun) and *akṣi* (eye) cannot be

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[1] *VS*, I.1.16: *Na itara anupapatteḥ.*
[2] *VS*, I.1.17.

jīvātman but Brahman since the scriptural text declares that the two are different (*bheda vyapadeśācca anyaḥ*).[1] In the Sarvatraprasiddhyadhikaraṇa, the Sūtrakāra affirms that the terms *manomaya* etc. used in the Upaniṣad denotes Brahman and not *śārīra* or individual soul because such attribution of qualities do not hold good in respect of *jīva*.[2] In the same *adhikaraṇa*, one other *sūtra* points out that two are designated in terms of an agent of action (*kartā*) and object of attainment (*karma*), that is, as the seeker of a goal and as the goal to be attained, thereby indicating the difference between the two.[3] In the Guhādhikaraṇa (which is part of Attradhikaraṇa for Rāmānuja), the *sūtra* mentions that two souls (*ātmānau*) enter the cave and this indicates the difference between *Paramātman* and *jīvātman*.[4] In Antaryamyadhikaraṇa discussing Brahman as the Inner Controller, one of the *sūtras* state in a characteristic way that *jīvātman* is specifically referred to as distinct from Brahman as *Antaryāmin* both in the Kāṇva and Mādhyandina recension of *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (*śārīraśca ubhaye'pi bhedenainam adhīyate*).[5] In the Adṛśyatvādhikaraṇa describing Brahman in negative terms such as *adṛśeya* etc., Bādarāyaṇa points out that *jīva* and *pradhāna* are not Brahman because of distinctive attributes and difference between them (*viśeṣaṇa bheda vyapadeśābhyām ca na itarau*).[6]

In the third *pāda* of first *adhyāya*, there are sufficient number of *sūtras* specifically drawing a distinction between Brahman and *jīva*. Thus, in the Dyubhvādhikaraṇa, describing Brahman as *āyatana* or abode of heaven, earth, etc. three *sūtras* express the distinction between Brahman and *jīva*. The *sūtra*, *prāṇabhṛcca*[7] states that the *jīvātman* cannot serve as abode of heaven etc. The next *sūtra* which reads: *bhedavyapadeśācca* emphasizes the distinction between *jīva* and Brahman on the basis of the former being designated as the knower (*jñātṛbhāva*) and the latter as the object of knowledge (*jñeyabhāva*) as evidenced by the text of the *Kaṭhopaniṣad*.[8] Another *sūtra* in this *adhikaraṇa* is more significant. It reads *sthityadanābhyām*.[9]

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[1] *VS*, I.1.21.

[2] *VS*, I.2.3: *Anupapattestu na śārīraḥ.*

[3] *VS*, I.2.4: *Karma kartṛ vyapadeśācca.*

[4] *VS*, I.2.11: *Guhāṁ praviṣṭau ātmānau hi taddarśanāt.*

[5] *VS*, I.2.20.

[6] *VS*, I.2.22.

[7] *VS*, I.3.4.

[8] *Kaṭha Up.*, II.2.5: *Tam evaikam jānatha ātmānam.*

[9] *VS*, I.3.7.

It implies the difference between Brahman and *jīva* in terms of *sthiti* or abiding and *adana* or eating. The *sūtra* refers to the famous passage of the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad,* which draws the clear distinction between Brahman and *jīva* by the analogy of two similar birds perched on the same tree but one (*Paramātman*) abiding passively without eating the fruit, while the other (*jīva*) eats the sweet fruit.[1]

The Daharādhikaraṇa covering an important passage of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* deals with the subject of Brahman as indwelling in the heart of the man for the purpose of meditation. It contains the description of Brahman and also of the *jīvātman* in terms of certain positive and negative attributes such as *apahata-pāpmatva* and *satyasaṁkalpatva.* In this connection the question is raised whether the spirit dwelling in the heart is the *jīva* or Brahman. The Sūtrakāra while affirming that Brahman is the *daharākāśa* also asserts that the attributes, functions and glories ascribed to it are impossible in respect of *jīva.* The relevant *sūtra* states: *itara paramarśāt sa iti cenna asambhavāt.*[2] Its meaning is that if it be said that the other one (individual self) is intended on account of a reference to it in the subsequent passage, the reply is given in the negative, since this is impossible (*asambhavāt*). The Sūtrakāra here definitely distinguishes Brahman from *jīva.* In the Itaravyapadeśādhikaraṇa dealing with the material causality of Brahman, one significant *sūtra* brings out the decisive view of Bādarāyaṇa on the question of the difference between *jīva* and *Īśvara.* The relevant *sūtra* reads: *adhikaṁtu bheda nirdeśāt.*[3] The word *adhikaṁ* means different (from the individual soul) that is, *Īśvara* as the creator of the universe is other than the *jīva* (*arthāntara bhūta* or *anyat*) because scriptural texts declare the two to be different.

In the second *adhyāya* also Bādarāyaṇa refers in a few *sūtras* to the difference between the two. Besides, he has devoted a few *adhikaraṇas* to discuss the nature of *jīvātman* presumably on the basis of the fact that *jīvātman* is a separate ontological entity.

The third *adhyāya,* which is devoted primarily to the discussion of *sādhana* for attainment of Brahman, clearly establishes the difference between *jīvātman* and Brahman since the *jīva* as the aspirant to *mokṣa* has to perform meditation on Brahman, the Spiritual Goal to be attained. The fourth *adhyāya* which discusses the status of

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[1] *Muṇḍ. Up.*, III.1.1.

[2] *VS,* I.3.18.

[3] *VS,* II.1.22.

jīvātman in the state of *mokṣa* after it is liberated from bondage acknowledges the difference between Brahman and *jīva* since it remains in a different realm enjoying the bliss of Brahman. Thus, all the relevant aphorisms in the *Brahmasūtra* mention explicitly that *jīva* and Brahman are different. This substantiates the fact that it is the convinced view of Bādarāyaṇa that *jīva* and Brahman are two distinct ontological entities.

Though Śaṁkara acknowledges this fact, yet he maintains on the strength of a few Upaniṣadic texts which speak of identity of Brahman and *jīvātman* such as *'tat-tvamasi'*, *'ayaṁātmā brahma'*, etc. that *jīva* is identical with Brahman and that in reality, Brahman itself conditioned by limiting adjuncts (*upādhis*) appears as *jīva*. Whether or not such a theory is tenable depends on the soundness of the doctrine of *māyā* or *avidyā* as developed by Śaṁkara. We shall discuss the theory of *māyā* in a separate chapter. For the present we have to find out if Bādarāyaṇa has expressed in any of the *sūtras*, that *jīva* and Brahman are identical (*abheda*).

There is no *sūtra* which mentions explicitly the *abheda* or identity of *jīva* and Brahman. On the contrary, there are several *sūtras* emphasizing directly the *bheda* or difference between the two. However, there are two important *adhikaraṇas* in which the *sūtras* dealing with the relation of *jīva* to Brahman indirectly refer to their identity, if we go by the interpretation of Śaṁkara. These *adhikaraṇas* are: Vākyānvayādhikaraṇa[1] and Aṁśādhikaraṇa.[2] Both these *adhikaraṇas* and the *sūtras* grouped under them need to be examined in detail to determine the view of Bādarāyaṇa on the crucial issue of identity of *jīva* and Brahman.

The Vākyānvayādhikaraṇa discusses an important passage of *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* enjoining the meditation (*nididhyāsana*) leading to the realization of Self (*ātma-darśana*). In this connection Bādarāyaṇa brings up the subject of the relation of Brahman to *jīva* and sets out his own view on the subject as against the views of two other theories advanced by Āśmarathya and Auḍulomi. The *sūtra* reads *vākyānvayāt*. Its general meaning is that *ātman* which is to be meditated upon is Brahman because of the connected meaning of the statements in the Upaniṣadic passage. The fuller implication of the *sūtra* can be made out with reference to the passage of *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* on the basis of which the *sūtra* is framed, both according to Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja. The passage known as *Maitreyī Brāhmaṇa* recording a dialogue between sage Yājñavalkya and his wife, Maitreyī states "Verily a husband is dear not for the sake of the husband but for the sake of *ātman* the husband is dear...; verily everything is dear not for the sake of everything but for the sake of *ātman* everything is dear. Verily, the *ātman* is to be seen, to be heard, to be reflected and to be meditated upon; O Maitreyī, when the *ātman* has been seen, heard and meditated, then all this is known."[1]

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[1] *VS*, I.4.19-22.

[2] *VS* II.3.43-53 acc. *SB*; II.3.42-52 acc. *RB*.

The question is raised here whether the *ātman* referred to in the passage means the *jīvātman* (individual self) or the *Paramātman*. According to the prima facie view, *ātman* is interpreted as *jīvātman* and a few arguments in support of it are also advanced. According to the comments of both Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, Bādarāyaṇa rejects the prima facie view and upholds that *ātman* in this passage is applicable to *Paramātman*. The main argument in support of it is that Maitreyī sought the advice regarding the ways and means of attaining *amṛta* or immortality (*mokṣa*) and it is only by the meditation of *Paramātman* that *mokṣa* can be attained. Besides, the statement made in the Upaniṣad namely, the knowledge of *ātman* leads to the knowledge of everything else becomes justified if Brahman as the cause of everything is realized. If the word *ātman* is taken as *Paramātman* then the earlier and later statements of the passage becomes well connected (*anvaya*).

In this connection the queston is raised as to why the Upaniṣadic passage which commences with the teaching of *jīvātman* concludes at the end with *Paramātman*. This is explained in three different ways by the three ancient Vedānta *ācāryas*, Āśmarathya, Auḍulomi and Kāśakṛtsna to whom Bādarāyaṇa refers by name in three successive *sūtras*.[2] Each one expresses an opinion regarding the nature of the relation of *jīva* to Brahman. The main issue involved is whether *jīva* and Brahman are absolutely different or non-different or different-cum-non-different. This is a crucial issue in the Vedānta and needs a careful study.

According to sage Āśmarathya, it is so because the individual self is grown out of *Paramātman*. The *sūtra* says: *pratijñā siddheḥ liṅgam*

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[1] *Bṛ. Up.*, IV.5.6: *Na vā are patyuḥ kāmāya patiḥ priyo bhavati ātmanastu kāmāya patiḥ priyo bhavati; ...na vā are sarvasya kāmāya sarvam priyam bhavati ātmanastu kāmāya sarvam priyam bhavati. Ātmā va are draṣṭavyaḥ śrotavyo mantavyo nididhyāsitavyaḥ.*

[2] *VS*, I.4.20, 21, 22.

āśmarathyaḥ. It means that for the purpose of fulfilling the declaration made in the Upaniṣad, it is so indicated according to Āśmarathya. The declaration refers to Upaniṣadic text which says that by knowing the self (*ātman*), everything else becomes known. The individual self is the product of *Paramātman* and hence the term *ātman* is to be taken as *Paramātman*. The implication of this view according to Śaṁkara, is that the individual soul and the highest Self are non-different. He further substantiates it by citing the illustration of the fire and sparks arising from it. Bhāmati, the commentator on *Śaṁkara Bhāṣya* is of the view that Āśmarathya upholds the relation of *bheda-abheda* or difference-cum-non-difference between *jīva* and Brahman on the same analogy of the fire and sparks arising from it. According to Rāmānuja's interpretation, the souls are one with Brahman in so far as they are its effects.

Auḍulomi, on the other hand, maintains that *jīvātman* and *Paramātman* are different from the empirical point of view but when the individual self which is associated with limiting adjuncts such as body, senses and mind, attains through meditation a state of complete serenity and gets rid of all the limiting adjuncts, it becomes one with Brahman. This is the implication of the *sūtra* which reads: *utkramiṣyata evaṁ bhāvāt iti auḍulomiḥ*. This means that the soul after it departs from the body and attains Brahman, it becomes one with *Paramātman*. This view is supported by the Upaniṣadic text which states that *jīva* arising from this body manifests itself in its own form as soon as it attains Brahman (*paraṁjyotiḥ upasaṁpadya svena rūpeṇa abhiniṣpadyate*).[1] The analogy of the rivers flowing into the ocean is offered to illustrate this point. The rivers flowing into the ocean loses all its name and form and becomes absorbed in it.[2] Rāmānuja takes the word *evaṁ-bhāvāt* in the sense that the *jīva* assumes the nature of Brahman (*paramātma-bhāva*) and not identity with it.

The third view advanced by Kásakṛtsna maintains that *Paramātman* abides in the individual self and hence it is possible to interpret *jīvātman* referred to in the Upaniṣadic passage as *Paramātman*. The *sūtra* reads *avasthiteḥ iti kāśakṛtsnaḥ*. The initial statement (*pratijña*) is made in the Upaniṣad because the highest Self exists in the individual self (*avasthiteḥ*). The word *avasthiti* is interpreted differently by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja. Śaṁkara understands this term in the sense that the highest Self exists as it were *jīva* and thereby implying an identity of *jīva* and Brahman. Rāmānuja, on the contrary, interprets it in the sense that *Paramātman* dwells in *jīvātman* as its *antaryāmin* and as such the term *jīva* ultimately denotes *Paramātman* (*jīva-śarīraka paramātmā*). Both the commentators, however, think that Kāśakṛtsna's view represents Bādarāyaṇa's view. Though this may be true, it is not certain if Bādarāyaṇa means by *avasthiti* absolute identity or oneness because this term in common parlance means that one thing abides in another. Besides, in several *sūtras* as we have observed earlier, Bādarāyaṇa openly speaks of difference between the two.

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[1] *Ch. Up.*,VII.12.3.

[2] *Muṇḍ. Up.*, III.2.8: *Yathā nadyaḥ syandamānāḥ samudre astaṁ gacchanti nāmarūpe vihāya.*

Madhva offers an altogether different interpretation of these *sūtras*. In the first place, he does not acknowledge that the *sūtra*, *vākyānvayāt* and three subsequent *sūtras* constitute a separate *adhikaraṇa* and it is taken as part of Samākarṣādhikaraṇa covering the three earlier *sūtras*, since these, according to Madhva, are concerned with establishing the *samanvaya* of the terms used in the *karmakāṇḍa* (ritualistic portion of the Vedas) with Brahman. In view of it, the *pūrvapakṣa* outlined by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja in favour of understanding *Ātman* as *jīvātman* and then presenting a *siddhānta* in support of Brahman with arguments and also raising the issue of *jīva*'s relation to Brahman are all not relevant. The term *Ātman* used in the concerned Upaniṣadic passage means Brahman according to the principle of *samanvaya*. The views ascribed to the three ancient sages are partial aspects of Bādarāyaṇa's own all comprehensive view propounded to suit different order of *adhikārins* in different stages of spiritual advancement. The Sūtrakāra, it is argued, has referred to them under the names of his own disciples, Jaimini, Āśmarathya, Auḍulomi, etc. to give them publicity in the world.[1]

Madhva may have his own justification to offer such an explanation which we need not question. The point we need to examine is whether the *sūtras* as they are worded do allow for such an interpretation. Taking the entire Upaniṣadic passage of *Maitreyī Brāhmaṇa* it is relevant for Bādarāyaṇa to examine whether *jīvātman* is the object of meditation. Considering the main objective of the philosophic teaching of Yājñavalkya to Maitreyī, who is seeking advice to attain immortality or *mokṣa*, the Sūtrakāra brings up in these three *sūtras,* the important question of Brahman vis-à-vis *jīvātman.* As pointed out by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, Bādarāyaṇa intends to establish that *Ātman* in this passage refers to *Paramātman* and also uphold the theory of Kāśakṛtsna which emphasizes that *Paramātman* indwells in *jīvātman* as implied by the word *avasthiti.*

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[1] See B.N.K Sharma, *The Brahmasūtras*, vol. 1, p. 298.

The nature of the relation of *jīva* to Brahman is brought out by Bādarāyaṇa in a specific way in the Aṁśādhikaraṇa where it is clearly stated that *jīva* is *aṁśa* of Brahman. The relevant *sūtra* reads: *aṁśo nānā vyapadeśāt anyathā ca'pi dāśakitavaditvam adhīyata eke.*[1] It means: 'The soul is a part of (Brahman) on account of difference and otherwise also; for in some (recensions of the Vedas) it is spoken of as being of the nature of slaves, fishermen, etc.'

Though the term *aṁśa* in the *sūtra* is intended to explain the nature of *jīva*'s relation to Brahman, its fuller implication has become a subject of controversy among the commentators. *Aṁśa* literally means part and Brahman being *niravayava* or partless, it is difficult to conceive how *jīva* can be a part of it. According to Śaṁkara, *jīva* is identical with Brahman and it cannot be actually part of Brahman. It only appears to be different from Brahman owing to its imaginary association with physical adjuncts. In order to fit in with this metaphysical doctrine, Śaṁkara interprets the term *aṁśa* as *aṁśa iva,* that is, it appears as if it were a part. In this sense the relationship between the two is analogous to fire and the sparks emanating from fire (*agni-visphuliṅgavat*). According to some commentators of *Śaṁkara Bhāṣya,* this view represents what is known in Advaita as *avacchedavāda,* that is, Brahman as conditioned by *antaḥkaraṇa* (mind) of an individual which is regarded as *jīva* (*antaḥkaraṇa-avacchinna-caitanya*). Another *sūtra* appearing in the same *adhikaraṇa* mentions *jīva* as *ābhāsa* (*ābhāsa eva ca*)[2] which Śaṁkara interprets as reflection of Brahman similar to the reflection of the sun in water (*jala sūryakādivat*). This is known as *bimba-pratibimba-vāda* advanced by Bhāmatī. In either case *jīva* is not a distinct real ontological entity but it is one with Brahman.

Rāmānuja, on the contrary, takes the term *aṁśa* in a direct sense as part of Brahman. The word 'part' is not understood as corporeal or divisible part of a whole entity, since Brahman is indivisible. He, therefore, explains the term in his comment on a later *sūtra* (II.3.45) that *aṁśa* means an integral part of one entity (*ekavastu ekadeśatvam*).

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[1] *VS,* II.3.43.

[2] *VS,* II.3.50.

To make it more clear he states that *aṁśa* is an essential attribute (*viśeṣaṇa*) of a qualified substance (*viśiṣṭasya ekavastunaḥ viśeṣaṇām aṁśa eva*). A substance as a qualified entity is inseparably related to its essential attribute similar to the sun and its rays. This relationship between the two is known as *aṁśa-aṁśi bhāva* or *viśeṣaṇa-viśesya bhāva*. In the ontological sense it is called *śarīra-śarīri bhāva* or the relation of body to the soul. In the same way *jīva* is related to Brahman. This explanation is offered by Rāmānuja on the basis of the *sūtra* and also on the authority of the *Antaryāmī Brāhmaṇa*. Bādarāyaṇa states that *jīva* is an *aṁśa* of Brahman because of the fact that some Upaniṣads speak Brahman and *jīva* are different (*nānā vyapadeśāt*) and also as non-different (*anyathā ca*). In order to uphold the validity of both kinds of scriptural texts, it is necessary to explain *aṁśatva* of *jīva* in the sense of an integral part of Brahman. Such a theory allows both difference and non-difference from different standpoints. The individual soul and Brahman are different by virtue of their intrinsic nature like the substance and its attribute but they can also be non-different or one as Brahman integrally related to the soul similar to the substance as inherently related to its attribute is one.

Madhva offers an altogether different interpretation on this *sūtra*. The *jīva*, according to him, is an *aṁśa* of Brahman in the sense that it has close resemblance to Brahman in respect of its essential properties of knowledge and bliss and that its very existence is sustained by Brahman. It is not a physical part but it is a reflection (*pratibimba*) in the sense of similarity or likeness to Brahman. The other words in the *sūtra* are also interpreted differently. *Nānāvyapadeśāt* means for Madhva that *jīva* is described in the scriptural texts in different ways such as father, son, brother, friend etc. The other word *anyathā* means that *jīva* is not the source of sustenance but on the contrary, it is the one which derives its sustenance from Brahman. He advances some arguments to support this novel interpretation. As these are of exegetical nature we may pass over them. What is important for our purpose is that according to Madhva a relationship of *aṁśa-aṁśi bhāva* between *jīva* and Brahman is to be accepted in the sense of 'ectype to archetype.'[1]

The three principal commentators are not agreed on the import of this crucial *sūtra* which directly deals with the relationship between *jīva* and Brahman. This makes it difficult to determine the exact view of Bādarāyaṇa on the subject. However, on the basis of the subsequent *sūtras* of this *adhikaraṇa* in which Bādarāyaṇa attempts to defend the concept of *aṁśatva* of *jīva*, it appears that the Sūtrakāra is not supporting the idea of identity of Brahman and *jīva*, as Śaṁkara believes. All the later *sūtras* clearly point towards a real difference between the two. The fact that Bādarāyaṇa speaks of *aṁśatva* of *jīva* with reference to the two exclusive views of *bheda-vyapadeśa* and *abheda-vyapadeśa* in the primary sense indicates that *jīva* is to be regarded as integrally related to Brahman as *aṁśa* to *aṁśi*. Such a theory of *aṁśa-aṁśi bhāva* is analogous to the *śarīra-śarīri bhāva* developed by Rāmānuja on the authority of the *Antaryāmī Brāhmaṇa*. This theory would allow for the acceptance of both *bheda* and *abheda* in their primary sense. As stated earlier, *jīva* and Brahman are different by virtue of their intrinsic nature but they are one in the sense of Brahman as organically related to the soul (*viśiṣṭaikya vivakṣayā ekatvavyapadeśaḥ*).[1] The explanation offered by Śaṁkara on the basis of the concept of *bimba-pratibimba* would reduce *jīva* to the status of an illusory appearance like the reflection of sun in water. The *sūtra, na ātmā śruteḥ nityatvāt* affirms *jīva*'s eternal reality. Besides, it does not accept *bheda* between *jīva* and Brahman in the primary sense as declared in the Upaniṣads and affirmed by Bādarāyaṇa. In the same way the explanation of Madhva on the basis of the concept of *sādṛśya* or similarity between *jīva* and Brahman in respect of certain attributes would not support *abheda* or the non-difference between them in the primary sense. If both *bheda* and *abheda* between *jīva* and Brahman in the primary sense are to be accepted, *jīva* is to be regarded as an *aṁśa* of Brahman in the sense of an integral part, as Bādarāyaṇa has clearly stated.

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[1] See B.N.K Sharma, *Brahmasūtras*, vol. 2, p. 269.

The relationship between *jīva* and Brahman is also discussed in the Ahikuṇḍalādhikaraṇa coming in the third *adhyāya*, according to *Śaṁkara Bhāṣya*. In the *Rāmānuja Bhāṣya* the *sūtras* under this *adhikaraṇa* primarily deal with the question of the relation of Brahman to the universe. This subject is, therefore, discussed in the chapter on the Universe. It is observed therein that Bādarāyaṇa is of the view that the relationship between Brahman and *jīva* is of the nature of *viśeṣaṇa-viśesya* or *aṁśa-aṁśi*.

In the fourth *pāda* of the fourth *adhyāya* which is devoted to the nature of the Supreme Goal, the subject of the status of *jīvātman* in the state of *mokṣa* comes up for consideration. In this connection, the question is raised whether *jīvātman* becomes one with Brahman or remains a separate entity as distinct from Brahman. We shall deal with this subject in detail in the chapter on the Supreme Goal. For the present we may briefly refer to the crucial *sūtra* which implies, as interpreted by Śaṁkara, the identity of *jīva* and Brahman. The *sūtra* reads: *avibhāgena dṛṣṭatvāt.* In explaining the implication of the term *avibhāga* or non-distinction, Śaṁkara asserts that *jīva* becomes one with Brahman after it is totally liberated from bondage on the strength of the scriptural texts which are claimed to declare the identity of *jīva* and Brahman.

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[1] See *supra*, p. 82, n. 1

Rāmānuja accepts the meaning of the term *avibhāga* as non-distinct. However its implication according to him is not absolute identity but on the contrary, it means that *jīva* in the state of *mokṣa* realizes that it is not separate (*apṛthak-bhūta*) since it is the mode of Brahman. On the strength of the scriptural texts which speak of equality (*sāmya*) between *jīva* and Brahman, it is maintained that *jīva* experiences itself as non-separate from Brahman in the sense that it is an integral part (*prakāra*) of Brahman. In view of this interpretation it cannot be said that Bādarāyaṇa accepts the identity of *jīva* and Brahman. Śaṁkara's interpretation of *avibhāga* would be sustained if Bādarāyaṇa had also accepted such a theory but the *Brahmasūtra,* on the other hand, mentions that *jīva* though equal with Brahman in the state of *mukti* is distinct since it does not possess the capacity to perform the cosmic functions (*jagat vyāpāra-varjam*) which is the unique characteristic of Brahman.

Thus, it follows that according to Bādarāyaṇa *jīva* is a distinct, eternal ontological entity which is the knowing subject (*jñātā*) and the agent of action (*kartā*) and it is integrally related to Brahman in the same way as an essential attribute is to its substance. There is both difference and non-difference between them from different standpoints.

Chapter 7

The Doctrine of Sādhana

The third *adhyāya* of *Vedāntasūtra* which is known as Sādhanādhyāya is devoted to the discussion of the ways and means of realizing Brahman. The Upaniṣads also lay equal emphasis on the pursuit of the spiritual discipline for achieving the Supreme Goal (*parama-puruṣārtha*). The purpose of the study of Vedānta is to acquire true knowledge of Brahman leading to its attainment. Thus says the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad:* "The knower of Brahman (*brahmavit*) attains the highest goal (*āpnoti param*)." Bādarāyaṇa, therefore, devotes special attention to this subject.

What is the nature of the *sādhana* according to Bādarāyaṇa? This is the main question with which we will be concerned in this chapter. The commentators on the *Vedāntasūtra* are not unanimous on the nature of the *sādhana.* The main controversy is centered round the issue whether the direct means to *mokṣa* is *jñāna* or it is the *upāsanā.* According to Śaṁkara, *jñāna* understood in the sense of direct realization of Brahman arising from *śravaṇa* (study of sacred texts), *manana* (repeated reflection of what is learnt) and *nididhyāsana* (meditation) is the direct means (*upāya*) to *mokṣa.* He justifies this theory on the ground that bondage is caused by *ajñāna* or ignorance of the identitiy of *jīva* and Brahman and that it can be removed only by true knowledge of Brahman. *Nididhyāsana* or meditation enjoined by the Upaniṣads is subsidiary to *jñāna.* Rāmānuja takes a different view. Mere knowledge of Brahman cannot lead to *mokṣa.* On the other hand, it is the knowledge of Brahman culminating in *nididhyāsana* or the unceasing meditation on Brahman that serves as the direct means to *mokṣa.* Madhva maintains that the vision of Brahman (*aparokṣa-jñāna*) arising from *śravaṇa, manana* and *nididhyāsana* is the direct means to *mokṣa.* Against such conflicting views we have to determine, on the basis of *Brahmasūtra,* the view of Bādarāyaṇa regarding the nature of the *sādhana.*

Though the third *adhyāya* of *Brahmasūtra* comprises the largest number of *adhikaraṇas*, all of them do not directly discuss the nature of the *sādhana*. The first *pāda* and the major part of second *pāda* deal with the transmigration of the soul and the conditions of the *jīva* in the state of waking, dream, deep sleep (*suṣupti*) and swoon (*mūrchā*) with the objective of inducing an individual to develop *vairāgya* or non-attachment towards worldly objects and consequently a craving for the attainment of the spiritual goal. The remaining *adhikaraṇas* of the second *pāda* discuss the twofold nature of Brahman to emphasize that it is the worthy goal to be pursued.[1] The third *pāda*, the biggest one in *Vedāntasūtra*, is devoted to an examination of several *vidyās* or types of meditation referred to in the Upaniṣads with the objective of determining their mutual differences or identities in terms of the attributes of Brahman described in the Upaniṣadic passages. Though the *vidyās* appear to be different in terms of the names and other descriptions (*sābdādi bheda*) it is pointed out that they are to be adopted as alternatives (*vikalpa*) since the goal of meditation namely the attainment of Brahman is the same for all (*vikalpo aviśiṣṭa phalatvāt*).[2] The fourth *pāda* takes up the elucidation of the nature of the *sādhana*. The very opening *sūtra* of this *pāda* in which the name of Bādarāyaṇa is mentioned refers to the nature of the *sādhana* through which *puruṣārtha* is achieved. This *sūtra* and a few other *adhikaraṇas* in this section as well as the first *pāda* of fourth *adhyāya* throw sufficient light on Bādarāyaṇa's view on the subject of *sādhana*.

THE NATURE OF SĀDHANA TO ATTAIN THE SUPREME GOAL

The *sūtra* that directly refers to the *sādhana* reads: *puruṣārtho ataḥ śabdāt iti Bādarāyaṇaḥ*.[3] The general meaning of the *sūtra* as interpreted both by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, is that in the opinion of Bādarāyaṇa the Supreme Goal (*puruṣārtha*) is attained only by means of *vidyā* (*ataḥ*), since it is so declared by the scriptural texts (*śabdāt*). Though the word *vidyā* is not mentioned in the *sūtra*, in the context of the earlier *pāda* and the subsequent *sūtras* of the present *adhikaraṇa*, the preposition *ataḥ* in the *sūtra* is interpreted to mean 'from *vidyā*' (*vidyātaḥ*). The Upaniṣadic texts quoted by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja in this connection use the expression *vedana* as the means of attainment. Thus says the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*,[1] "The knower of Brahman attains the highest." The *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*[2] says "He who knows Brahman becomes Brahman." The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*[3] states that "there is no other means than knowing him to overcome bondage." In view of these statements, the word *ataḥ* is taken to mean as from *vidyā*. The point for our consideration is what does the word *vidyā* imply?

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[1] This is the explanation offered by Rāmānuja. Śaṁkara too generally agrees with it but Madhva regards that the second *pāda*, which is named as *bhakti pāda*, deals with *bhakti* to bring to the minds of the *upāsaka* the glory of God.

[2] See *VS*, III.3.59 acc. *SB*; III.3.58 acc. *RB*. Madhva reads the *sūtra* as *vikalpo viśiṣṭaphalatvāt* and interprets it differently. See *MSB*, III.3.61.

[3] *VS*, III.4.1.

The term *vidyā* is often used in the *sūtras* of the third *pāda*. In all these places it is understood by all the commentators in the sense of *upāsanā* or meditation. Again in the first *pāda* of fourth *adhyāya* some of the *adhikaraṇas* which are devoted to elucidate the manner of the observance of *sādhana* such as repeated practice (*asakṛt āvṛtti*), the need of steady posture (*āsana*), concentration (*ekāgrata*) and steadfast contemplation (*dhyāna*), clearly indicate that Bādarāyaṇa means by *vidyā* the *upāsanā* or meditation.

Though Bādarāyaṇa seems to have a clear idea of what *vidyā* stands for, the commentators have interpreted it in different ways to fit with their metaphysical doctrines. Rāmānuja has, however, accepted the view of Bādarāyaṇa as explained above and he maintains all through his commentary that *vidyā* stands for *upāsanā*. Though some of the Upaniṣadic texts refer to the expressions such as *vedana, darśana, jñāna*, etc., as means to *mokṣa*, he takes these terms as synonymous with *upāsanā*, also known as *nididhyāsana* and *dhyāna* which are enjoined by the Upaniṣads as means to *mokṣa*. He justifies his interpretation on the basis of the fact that the very Upaniṣadic passages relating to meditation use *vedana* and *upāsanā* as interchangeable words.[4] The several *vidyās* such as *sadvidyā, daharavidyā, upakosala vidyā* taught in the Upaniṣads also use the word *vidyā* in the sense of *upāsanā*. The commentators including Śaṁkara acknowledge this fact.

In the present *sūtra* Śaṁkara, however, interprets the word *vidyā* as *ātmajñāna* or knowledge of Brahman which is regarded as the

[1] *Tait. Up.*, III.4.1: *Brahmavidāpnoti param.*

[2] *M. Up.: Brahma veda brahmaiva bhavati.*

[3] *Śvet. Up.: Tameva viditvā atimṛtyumeti nānyaḥ panthā vidyate ayanāya.*

[4] See *SB*, IV.1.1: *Vidyupastyośca vedānteṣu avyatirekeṇa prayogo dṛśyate; kvacit vidinā upakramya upāsinā upasaṁharati.* See also *RB*, I.1.1. *Vidyupāsyayoḥ vyatirekeṇa upakrama upasaṁhāra darśanāt.* Cf. *Ch. Up.*, IV.1.4 and V.2.2. Also *Ch. Up.*, III.18.1 and III.18.3.

direct *sādhana* for *mokṣa,* though *vidyā* is understood by him as *upāsanā* in connection with the different kinds of *vidyās* discussed in the third *pāda.* The reason for advancing this view is that *ajñāna* or ignorance of the true nature of Brahman is the cause of bondage and this can be eradicated only by *jñāna* or intuitive knowledge of higher Brahman and not by *upāsanā* on the *Saguṇa* Brahman. In view of this metaphysical position, Śaṁkara understands the term *vidyā* as *ātma-jñāna* which is the direct *sādhana* to attain the *puruṣārtha.*

Madhva interprets the term *ataḥ* in the *sūtra* as *aparokṣa jñāna* or direct vision of Brahman (*darśana*) arising from *śravaṇa, manana* and *nididhyāsana* (*upāsanā*) and this is considered as the direct means to *mokṣa.*[1] *Puruṣārtha* is understood as not only *mokṣa* but all desirable ends of human endeavour. In one of the *sūtras* found in the third *pāda* (III.3.48) which is considered to constitute a separate *adhikaraṇa* by Madhva named Vidyādhikaraṇa, *vidyā* is interpreted as *aparokṣa jñāna* which alone is the direct means to *mokṣa.*[2] All *upāsanās* enjoined in the Upaniṣads are intended to attain the *aparokṣa jñāna.*

The *sūtras* as they are worded do not seem to lend any support to either Śaṁkara's view of *vidyā* as *ātmā-jñāna* or Madhva's meaning as *aparokṣa jñāna.* For the reasons already explained earlier, Bādarāyaṇa understands the term *vidyā* as *upāsanā* or 'unceasing meditation on Brahman, as rightly interpreted by Rāmānuja.

In order to determine the correct import of the word *ataḥ* used by Bādarāyaṇa to convey the nature of *sādhana,* it is necessary to understand the context in which the *sūtra* is introduced in the Puruṣārthādhikaraṇa comprising several *sūtras.* The important issue involved here, as is evident in the subsequent *sūtra,* is whether *vidyā* or *karma* is the direct means to *mokṣa.* According to the prima facie view which is ascribed to the Mīmāṁsakas, *karma* is the means to secure liberation and *vidyā* enjoined in the Upaniṣads is a subsidiary aid to it or instrumental to gain knowledge of the *jīvātman* who is the agent of the rituals. Several *sūtras* are put forward to defend this theory. Jaimini is mentioned by name as the advocate of this theory.[3]

[1] See *MSB,* III.4.1: *Yaddarśanārthaṁ upāsanā uktā tasmāt darśanāt sarva puruṣārtha prāptiḥ iti bādarāyaṇo manyate.*

[2] See *MSB,* III.3.48: *Tameva viditvā atimṛtyumeti nānyaḥ panthā vidyate ayanāya iti nirdhāraṇāt vidyayā eva mokṣaḥ.*

[3] See *VS,* III.4.2: *Seṣatvāt puruṣārtha vādaḥ yathā anyeṣu iti jaiminiḥ.* Madhva does not believe that Jaimini would have advocated this theory as he accepts Brahman as the Supreme Being.

But Bādarāyaṇa rejects it, as interpreted by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja. He reaffirms that in his opinion that Jaimini's thesis is not tenable because *vidyā* referred to in the Upaniṣads is not concerning the individual self, in which case it would be instrumental to *karma* but on the other hand, it relates to the Supreme Self. The *sūtra* clearly states: *adhikopadeśāt tu bādarāyaṇasya evam taddarśanāt.* It means that on account of the teaching of the different one (Brahman other than *jīva*) Bādarāyaṇa's view as already stated in the earlier *sūtra* is valid, since it is supported by the Śruti. The attainment of Brahman is, therefore, possible only through *vidyā* taken in the sense of *upāsanā.* In the light of these *sūtras, vidyā* stands for *upāsanā* or unceasing meditation enjoined in the Upaniṣads as *sādhana* for the attainment of the Supreme Goal.

THE NATURE AND COMPONENTS OF UPĀSANĀ

That Bādarāyaṇa advocates *vidyā* as the direct *sādhana* for *mokṣa* becomes confirmed from the details furnished in the subsequent *adhikaraṇas* of the fourth *pāda* of third *adhyāya* and also the first *pāda* of the fourth *adhyāya.* On the basis of the Upaniṣads, one of the *sūtras* mentions the observance of the prescribed rituals and austerities. The *sūtra* reads: *sarvāpekṣā ca yajñādi śruteḥ aśvavat.*[1] It means that there is need of all (rituals) on account of the scriptural statement of sacrifice and the rest, as in the case of a horse. The reference is to the text of *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*: "Seekers of Brahman, seek to know Him by the study of the Veda, by sacrifice, by charity and austerity."[2] Though the word *vividiṣanti* in the Upaniṣad literally means desire to know (Brahman), it is generally understood as *vedana* or knowledge of Brahman. *Yajña, dāna, tapas,* etc. which are prescribed by the Upaniṣad constitute the prerequisites for knowing Brahman. The *sūtra* and the Upaniṣadic text are interpreted differently. The question raised by Śaṁkara is whether these requirements are to be followed until Brahman knowledge arises or even thereafter. His view is that once knowledge arises, performance of *karma* is not needed. *Karma* is an aid to the achievement of Brahman-knowledge. The example of the horse which is cited to illustrate the point is explained by Śaṁkara to fit with his view. A horse is to be used for the purpose of drawing a cart and not for ploughing. In the same way *karma* is needed for generating knowledge but it is not required after knowledge has arisen.

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[1] *VS,* III.4.26.

[2] *Bṛ. Up.,* IV.4.22: *Tametaṁ vedānuvacanena Brahmaṇa vividiṣanti yajñena dānena tapasā anāśakena.*

Rāmānuja takes the word *jñāna* or *vedana* as *upāsanā* or the unceasing meditation on Brahman. *Karma* is, therefore, an aid to *vidyā* and it has to be necessarily observed until one attains liberation. This is similar to the use of the horse. A horse which is intended for the purpose of going from one place to another is to be used along with the requisite accessories until *mokṣa* is attained. If this interpretation which is appropriate is accepted, it follows that according to Bādarāyaṇa, the performance of the prescribed rituals are the necessary requisites for *upāsanā* as the direct *sādhana* to *mokṣa.*

Besides the performance of the prescribed rituals, Bādarāyaṇa lays down another set of accessories to the knowledge of Brahman which are in the form of development of virtues such as *śama* or calmness, *dama* or control of senses, *uparati* or inner satisfaction, *titikṣu* or patience and *samāhitatva* or equanimity.[1] Whether the cultivation of these virtues is an accessory to obtain knowledge of Brahman or whether they serve as aid to *upāsanā* for attainment of Brahman is a matter of difference of opinion between Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja. If *jñāna* is taken as knowledge in the form of *upāsanā*, as Rāmānuja maintains, it is obvious that Bādarāyaṇa is in favour of the fulfilment of certain requisites as necessary accessories to *upāsanā* which is the *sādhana* for *mokṣa.*

The *adhikaraṇas* in the first *pāda* of fourth *adhyāya* throw more light on the nature of the *sādhana.* The very first *sūtra* in this section reads: *āvṛttiḥ asakṛt upadeśāt. Āvṛttiḥ* means repetition or repeated observance and *asakṛt* means more than once. What is it that is to be repeated? In the context of the earlier *adhyāya* devoted to *sādhana,* all commentators take it to refer to the repeated observance of the *sādhana* laid down for the attainment of the Supreme Goal. What is that *sādhana*? With reference to the Upaniṣadic texts which teach the means of attainment of Brahman, Śaṁkara states that direct knowledge of Brahman or more appropriately the realization of the identity of *jīva* and Brahman obtained by *śravaṇa, manana* and *nididhyāsana* is the direct means to *mokṣa*. If this be so, what is to be repeatedly practised is not the knowledge itself, which is the goal but the contemplation (*nididhyāsana*). This is what is intended by the Sūtrakāra according to Śaṁkara's interpretation. The contemplation is to be carried on continuously until Brahman is intuited (*darśana paryavasāni*). When once intuitive knowledge arises, there is no need to practise it repeatedly.

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[1] *Bṛ. Up.*, IV.4.23: *Tasmad evaṁ vit śānto dānta uparataḥ titikṣuḥ samāhito bhūtva ātmanyeva ātmanam paśyati.*

Rāmānuja takes the view that *vedana* understood in the sense of *dhyāna* or *upāsanā* as enjoined in the Upaniṣads as the *sādhana* is to be repeatedly observed. *Dhyāna* is *cintana* or concentrated contemplation in the form of continuous recollection of the object of meditation (*vijātīya pratyayāntara avyavahitam eka cintanam*). In other words, *upāsanā* is to be observed not once as in the case of *yāga* (sacrifice) for a fruitful purpose but repeatedly. This is the meaning of the words *asakṛt āvṛttiḥ* in the *sūtra*. This is taught in the Upaniṣads (*upadeśāt*).[1]

Madhva maintains the view that *śravaṇa, manana* and *nididhyāsana* laid down in the Upaniṣadic texts are all to be constantly and repeatedly gone through for attaining *aparokṣa jñāna* which directly leads to *mokṣa* and not only once (to yield their fruit) as in the case of the performance of rites and sacrifices like *agniṣṭoma* and *darśapūrṇamāsa*. *Mokṣa* is the highest *puruṣārtha* and it cannot be expected to be achieved by a single act of *śravaṇa, manana*, etc. This is what the scripture teaches, as for example the repeated teaching of the Vedānta by Uddālaka to his son Śvetaketu in *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* and by Varuṇa to Bhṛgu in *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*.

Though there may be some variation in the explanation offered by the three commentators, it is to be acknowledged that according to Bādarāyaṇa, the *sādhana* or means of attaining Brahman is to be repeatedly practised. It is obvious that this *sādhana* cannot be anything other than *upāsanā* which is the main subject-matter of the entire third *adhyāya*. *Jñāna* in the sense of direct realization or intuition of the identity of Brahman and *jīva* (*ātmaikya jñāna*) as Śaṁkara advocates does not need to be repeatedly practised. Śaṁkara himself acknowledges this fact. When once it arises there is an end of bondage. If *jñāna* is understood as *vākyārtha jñāna* or *vṛttijñāna*, that is, knowledge arising from *śravaṇa, manana* and *nididhyāsana*, it needs to be repeated until direct realization of

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[1] *RB*, IV.1.1: *Āsakṛt āvṛttameva vedanam śāstrārthaḥ.*

Brahman is achieved. *Aparokṣa jñāna* itself, which according to Madhva, leads to *mokṣa* cannot also be repeatedly practised. When it arises, there is no more bondage for the individual self. It is a state of *jīvanmukti* for Madhva. It is, therefore, appropriate to assume that Bādarāyaṇa in advocating *asakṛt-āvṛtti* accepts *nididhyāsana* or *upāsanā* as the direct *sādhana* to *mokṣa*.

This view becomes further confirmed from the next *sūtra* reading as *liṅgācca*. The term *liṅga* as contrasted to Śruti, is generally understood as Smṛti text. It is, therefore, the intention of Bādarāyaṇa to assert in this *sūtra* that repeated performance of meditation is also supported by the Smṛti text besides scripture. Accordingly, Rāmānuja quotes a verse from the authoritative *Viṣṇupurāṇa*. This verse clearly points out that the continuous unbroken series of meditation on Brahman is called *dhyāna* and that it is to be generated by the first six *yogāṅgas*.[1] Madhva in interpreting this *sūtra* quotes a Smṛti text according to which *śravaṇa, manana* and *nididhyāsana* are to be repeatedly observed by those who desire the vision of Brahman.

Śaṁkara offers an altogether different interpretation on this *sūtra*(*liṅgācca*). He means by *liṅga* the indicatory mark. Repetition is necessary because of the teaching by the Upaniṣad of the identity of *jīva* and Brahman to Śvetaketu. He, therefore, raises the question: if by single act of comprehension of the philosophic truth contained in the famous maxim *tattvamasi* one can gain knowledge of Brahman, would there be any need for contemplation repeatedly? By adopting two types of *adhikārins* or aspirants for *mokṣa* namely enlightened (*nipuṇa mati*) and unenlightened (*manda mati*), he admits that *āvṛtti* is not necessary in the case of an individual who can realize Brahman in a single act of comprehension. It may be necessary for others. It is doubtful if Bādarāyaṇa intended to convey such an import in the *sūtra* which contains an unambiguous word *liṅgācca*.

The *adhikaraṇas* 6, 7, 8 which deal with the manner of observance of the *sādhana* confirm the fact that Bādarāyaṇa is in favour of *upāsanā* as the *sādhana*. The *sūtra* in the Āsīnādhikaraṇa states that meditation is to be carried on in a sitting posture, since in that posture only the requisite concentration of mind can be reached

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[1] See *VP: Tadrūpa pratyaye ca ekā santatiśca anya nispṛhaḥ; taddhyānaṁ prathamaiḥ ṣaḍbiḥ aṅgaiḥ niṣpādyate tathā.*

(*āsinaḥ saṁbhavāt*).[1] The next *sūtra* in the same *adhikaraṇa* explicitly states that the mental activity in question is of the nature of *dhyāna* or meditation.[2] Both Rāmānuja and Śaṁkara explain the term *dhyāna* as continuous undisturbed concentration of the mind on the object of meditation.[3] The sitting posture is recommended as steadiness of the body (*acalatva*) is needed for concentration. The *sūtra* which says *smaranti ca* refers to the authority of the Smṛti text in support of Bādarāyaṇa's views. The verse from *Bhagavadgītā* is quoted both by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja.[4] The place and time chosen for practice of meditation should be such as would enable the individual to secure concentration of mind.[5] Further, Bādarāyaṇa points out that the *upāsanā* is to be carried on up to the end of one's life and that this fact is also mentioned in the Upaniṣad.[6] All these *sūtras* reveal without any shadow of doubt that Bādarāyaṇa not only advocates *upāsanā* as the *sādhana* to be pursued for the attainment of Brahman but also that it involves the practice of the *aṣṭāṅga yoga* or the eightfold discipline of yoga system. Though all the eight limbs of yoga are not mentioned in the *sūtras*, the important ones such as *āsana, dhāraṇa* and *dhyāna* referred to would suffice to regard *upāsanā* as a rigorous spiritual discipline. The scrupulous observance of the prescribed rituals such as *yajña, tapas* and the cultivation of ethical virtues such as *śama, dama, titikṣu*, etc. mentioned in the third *adhyāya* cover in a general way the *yama* and *niyama* of *yogāṅgas*. The difference between Patañjali's yoga discipline and that of Vedānta lies in respect of *samādhi*. In the yoga, *samādhi* culminates in the self-realization or the attainment of the state in which the individual self reveals itself in its true form absolutely unassociated with *citta* or mind, whereas in Vedānta it is the attainment of a state in which *jīva* becomes one with Brahman, according to Śaṁkara or it enjoys the bliss of Brahman without loosing its individuality, according to Rāmānuja and Madhva. In either case there is no return for the *jīvātman* to the mundane existence. As will be seen in the next chapter, the attainment of such a state by the individual constitutes the *mokṣa* which is the highest Spiritual Goal of human endeavour and which is to be attained by *sādhana.*

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[1] *VS*, IV.1.7.

[2] *VS*, IV.1.8: *Dhyānācca.*

[3] See *SB*, IV.1.8: *Dhyāyati artha eṣaḥ, yat samāna pratyaya-pravāha-karaṇam.* Cf. *RB*, *dhyānam hi vijātīya pratyayāntara avyavahitam eka cintanam.*

[4] *BG*, VI.11, 12: *Śucau deśe pratiṣṭāpya sthiramāsanam ātmanaḥ... tatraikāgram manaḥ kṛtva... yogamātmaviśuddhaye.*

[5] *VS*, IV.1.11: *Yatra ekāgratā tatra aviśeṣāt.*

[6] *VS*, IV.1.12: *Āprayāṇāt tatrāpi hi dṛṣṭam.* See *Ch. Up.*, VIII.15.1: *Sa khalu evaṁ vartayan yāvadāyuṣaṁ brahma lokam abhisaṁpadyata iti.*

From the foregoing discussion, based on the objective evaluation of the relevant *sūtras,* the *sādhana* according to Bādarāyaṇa is *upāsanā* or the unceasing meditation on Brahman qualified with attributes and it is a rigorous ethico-spiritual discipline analogous to the eightfold yoga discipline of Patañjali (*aṣṭāṅga yoga*) to be practised continuously till the end of one's life (*aprayāṇam*) along with the cultivation of ethical virtues (*śama, dama,* etc.) and the scrupulous observance of all the prescribed religious duties (*yajña, tapas,* etc.). There is no mention in the *sūtras* of any other type of *sādhana* such as *brahmopāsana* leading to direct realization of the identity of *jīva* and Brahman (*ātmaikya jñāna*). Nor is there any reference to the *aparokṣa jñāna* in the form of *bimba-darśana* arising from *dhyāna* which directly leads to *mokṣa.*

Chapter 8

The Doctrine of Parama Puruṣārtha

The fourth chapter of *Brahmasūtra* which is designated as Phalādhyāya deals with the nature of *mokṣa* which is considered as the Supreme Goal to be attained by the individual self. Though all the *adhikaraṇas* in the four sections of this chapter do not directly deal with this subject, there are a few important ones in the fourth *pāda* in which Bādarāyaṇa expresses his views on the nature of *mokṣa*. He mentions his own name in two places[1] to reafffirm his view regarding the status of *jīva* in *mokṣa* as against that of Auḍulomi, Bādari and Jaimini. Though there is some vagueness in the words of these *sūtras*, which have given room for different interpretations by the commentators to suit their metaphysical positions, it is still possible to discern the views of Bādarāyaṇa on the subject.

THE NATURE OF THE SUPREME GOAL

Leaving aside the subjects relating to the exit of the soul from the body (*utkrānti*) and the path through which it traverses (*arcirādi-mārga*) which are covered in the 2nd and 3rd sections, we shall take up the nature of the Supreme Goal which is covered in the fourth *pāda*. The important issue which needs to be considered here is whether the *jīvātman*, after it is totally liberated from bondage, becomes one with Brahman or whether it retains its individuality and enjoys the supreme bliss of Brahman. The first two *adhikaraṇas* of the 4th *pāda*: (a) Sampadyāvirbhāvādhikaraṇa and (b) Avibhāgenadṛṣṭatvādhikaraṇa—discuss this matter. The relevant *sūtra* of the former *adhikaraṇa* reads: *saṁpadyāvirbhāvaḥ svena śabdāt.*[2] It means that (the soul) after reaching Brahman manifests itself in its own nature because of the word *svena* or 'its own' (used in the Upaniṣad). The fuller meaning of the *sūtra* can be made out from the text of *Chāndogya Upaniṣad,* to which it has a direct reference. The Upaniṣad states: "This serene being (the individual self) having risen from this body and having attained the Supreme Light (*paraṁ jyoti*), manifests itself in its own inherent nature."[1] The word *saṁpadya* in the *sūtra,* therefore, means that the individual self having reached the Supreme Being. The next word of the *sūtra, āvirbhāvaḥ* implies that it manifests itself. The question that arises here is in what form does it manifest? Does it manifest by assuming a new form or in its own true form? According to the prima facie view, it manisfests with a new form as otherwise such an attainment cannot be treated as a goal. The Sūtrakāra, according to the interpretation of Śaṁkara, rejects it and upholds that the soul manifests in its own true form: *kevalena ātmanā āvirbhavati, na dharmāntareṇa.* The reason for holding this view is that words *svena rūpeṇa* which means 'its own form' are used in the Upaniṣadic text. The same is reiterated in the *sūtra* as *svena śabdāt.* The word *svena* or its own natural form would be meaningless, if we took it as manifestation by acquisition of any new state.

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[1] *VS*, IV.4.7, 12.

[2] *VS*, IV.4.1.

While commenting on the subsequent *sūtra*[2] Śaṁkara explains that *abhiniṣpatti* or manifestation implies that the self manifests itself in its pure form having got rid of all bondage (*sa sarvabandha-vinirmuktaḥ śuddhaineva ātmanā avatiṣṭhate*). This explanation is offered on the basis of the statements in the passage of *Chāndogya Upaniṣad.* The passage commences with the teaching about the state of released soul (*muktātmā*) and then describes the condition of the soul with the three states of waking, sleep and *suṣupti*; it also mentions that the soul in its final state as disembodied is untouched by good and evil and finally concludes that it manifests itself in its true intrinsic character. When the passage refers to *ātman* in the beginning, it describes it as free from evil (*apahata-pāpma*). This description is applicable to *muktātmā* or liberated soul. The attainment of such a state by the soul is the *mokṣa* or the total liberation from bondage which is the Supreme Goal or *Puruṣārtha,* according to Śaṁkara.

Rāmānuja also generally agrees that the individual self after it leaves the body and reaches the Supreme Light (*paraṁjyoti*) does not assume any new form (*na apūrvākāra*) but manifests itself in its

[1] *Ch. Up.,* VII.12.2: *Eṣa saṁprasādo asmāt śarīrāt samutthāya paraṁ jyotir upasaṁpadya svena rūpeṇa abhiniṣpadyate.*

[2] *VS,* IV.4.2: *Muktaḥ pratijñānāt.*

own true nature (*sva svarupa avirbhava rupaḥ*), because of the mention of the term *svena* in the Upaniṣad. What is implied by the *sūtra* is that the released soul abides in its essential nature after it becomes totally liberated from the *karma* and its effects in the form of body etc. Though the essential nature of the *jīva* is eternally accomplished, it can still be regarded as a goal. During the state of bondage the true nature of the soul was obscured by *avidyā* in the form of *karma* and now with the removal of this obscuration (*tirodhāna nivṛtti*) the soul is made to manifest itself in its true nature. Hence *āvirbhāva* in its true form can be treated as a goal.

While the above interpretation does not basically differ from that of Śaṁkara, Rāmānuja further adds on the basis of the next *sūtra*[1] and also on the authority of the later passage of *Chāndogya*, in which *jīva* is described as free from evil, from old age, from death, from grief, from hunger and thirst, as *satyakāma* and *satyasaṅkalpa* that the *jīva* in the state of *mukti* manifests itself with all these essential characteristics and not merely in its own *svarūpa*, as Śaṁkara states. The word *āvirbhāva*, therefore, implies manifestation of *jīva* with all its essential qualities which were obscured during the state of bondage. These are not newly brought into existence. This is illustrated by the analogy of the gem and its lustre. When the dirt on the gem is removed, its lustre is restored and not newly produced. In the same way the essential characteristics of the soul are not created but made to manifest by getting rid of its *karma*.

Madhva offers an altogether different explanation on this important *sūtra*. He raises a doubt, as a possible prima facie view, whether the *mukta-jīva* experiences the bliss of the self (*svarūpānanda*) and other forms of *bhoga* by going beyond Brahman or by remaining in close vicinity to Brahman. The *sūtra*, according to Madhva, is intended to make it clear that the *mukta-jīva* does not go beyond or cross over Brahman, in order to be able to attain the realization of his innate bliss in its fullest measure. The word *āvirbhāva* is to be read as *avihāya*, which means the released *jīva* enjoys this bliss without leaving Brahman but in its closest vicinity on the authority of *Sauparṇa Śruti* (which is not extant) and also the *Chāndogya*.[2] By adopting such an interpretation, the next two *sūtras* which form part of this *adhikaraṇa* for Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja are treated by Madhva as two separate *adhikaraṇas* (Muktādhikaraṇa and Ātmādhikaraṇa).

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[1] *VS*, IV.4.3: *Ātmā prakaraṇāt*.

[2] *Sauparṇa Śruti* quoted by Madhva in *BSB*, IV.4.1: *Sa ya evaṁ videvaṁ manvāna evaṁ paśyan ātmānam abhisaṁpadya etena ātmanā yathā kāmaṁ sarvān kāmān anubhavati* (this is not extant). Also see *supra*, p. 125, n. 1.

We are concerned here to determine the view of Bādarāyaṇa on the nature of *mokṣa*. The *sūtra* as it is worded and the text of *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* on which it is formulated, do not seem to have any bearing on the interpretation offered by Madhva. Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja have brought out the import of the *sūtra* more correctly than Madhva, though there is some difference of opinion between them regarding the true nature of *jīvātman* in the state of *mukti*. There is no dispute regarding the fact that the *jīva* after it is fully liberated from bondage manifests itself in its true nature. This appears to represent the view of Bādarāyaṇa.

THE STATUS OF JĪVA IN THE STATE OF MUKTI

Another issue of greater importance which is raised in this connection is whether the released soul becomes one with Brahman (*avibhakta*) or it remains distinct from Brahman (*pṛthak*). This is taken up for consideration in the next *adhikaraṇa* known as Avibhāgena-dṛṣṭatvādhikaraṇa. The single *sūtra* constituting this topic reads: *avibhāgena dṛṣṭatvāt*.[1] The *sūtra* is interpreted in two different ways by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja. Śaṁkara, who upholds the identity of Brahman and *jīva*, interprets it to mean that the *jīva* after reaching Brahman remains as non-distinct (*avibhāga*) in the sense of absolute identity. The reason for advancing this explanation is that according to Śaṁkara, the Upaniṣadic texts speak of absolute identity of *jīva* and Brahman. Thus says the Upaniṣad: "That thou art", "I am Brahman", "where nothing else is seen." Accordingly, the word *dṛṣṭatvāt* used in the *sūtra* means that all the Upaniṣadic texts reveal that *jīva* is identical with Brahman (*avibhāgenaiva paramātmānaṁ darśayanti*).[2] The few scriptural texts which speak of distinction between the two are to be taken in the secondary sense. The so called difference between *jīva* and Brahman is an illusion caused by *avidyā*, but when *avidyā* is eradicated, the identity is realized.

For Rāmānuja, Brahman and *jīva* are two distinct real entities though they are integrally related (*apṛthak bhūta*) as substance and attribute (*prakāri* and *prakāra*). In view of this, he interprets the term *avibhāga* as non-distinct in the sense that *jīva* as a *prakāra* or mode of Brahman is inseparable from the latter. That is, when the *jīva* attains Brahman after it is liberated from bondage, it realizes that it is integrally related to Brahman (*parasmāt brahmaṇaḥ svātmānam avibhāgena anubhavati muktaḥ*). This is the meaning of the word *dṛṣṭatvāt* in the *sūtra*, according to Rāmānuja. Though *jīva* by virtue of its intrinsic nature is inseparable from Brahman, this fact is actually realized in the state of *mukti* only because it has now been freed from *avidyā* which obscured the true knowledge of the self. The relevant Upaniṣadic texts which are quoted by Śaṁkara in support of identity are understood by Rāmānuja in the sense of *jīva* as an integral part of Brahman. The *Antaryāmī Brāhmaṇa* of *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* clearly states that Brahman dwells within the *jīvātman* and the latter is its *śarīra* or body. The Sūtrakāra also affirms that *Paramātman* abides in the *jīva*.[1] The Upaniṣadic texts which speak of *sāmya* and *sādharmya* in the state of *mokṣa* convey the idea that *jīva* is equal to Brahman in terms of purity (*samāna śuddhi*) and also in respect of enjoyment of bliss (*bhoga*). Thus, according to Rāmānuja, *jīva* does not become identical with Brahman, as Śaṁkara maintains but it realizes that it is an integral part of Brahman, while at the same time it retains its separateness or difference from Brahman as emphasized in the *Vedāntasūtra* (*adhikaṁ tu bheda nirdeśāt*).[2]

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[1] *VS*, IV.4.4.

[2] *SB*, IV.4.4.

Madhva offers radically different explanation. As an adherent of absolute difference between *jīva* and Brahman, he does not raise the issue whether *jīva*, after reaching Brahman remains non-distinct or distinct from it. On the contrary, he raises the question whether the *muktas* or released souls enjoy all the *bhogas* which are enjoyed by Brahman or only those *bhogas* not enjoyed by Brahman. In the opinion of Madhva, the *sūtra* points out that *sāyujya muktas* enjoy only those *bhogas* which are enjoyed by Brahman, though it may be an iota of *bhoga* of Brahman.[3] The word *avibhāga* is interpreted in the sense that there is no difference in respect of the *bhogas* enjoyed by Brahman and *jīva* in the state of *mukti*. The word *dṛṣṭatvāt* means for Madhva that it is so stated in the scripture and in support of it he quotes a text from the *Caturveda-śākha* and a verse from the *Bhaviṣyapurāṇa.*

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[1] *VS*, I.4.22: *Avasthiteḥ iti kāśakṛtsnaḥ*. See also *supra*, ch. 6, p. 108.

[2] *VS*, II.1.22.

[3] *MSB*, IV.4.4: *Ye bhogāḥ paramātmanā bhujyante tā eva muktaiḥ bhujyante.*

Coming to the view of Bādarāyaṇa regarding this matter, it may be observed that the earlier three *sūtras*, which are based on the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* deal with the status of *jīva* after it is liberated from bondage and attains Brahman. In this context it is appropriate to consider in the subsequent *sūtra* the question of *jīva*'s status in relation to Brahman after its emancipation. It does not therefore appear to be relevant to bring in here the question of *bhoga* to be experienced by *jīva*, as Madhva has explained. Besides, Bādarāyaṇa discusses in the later *sūtras* of this very *pāda*, the possibility of *jīva* assuming a body to perform certain activities mentioned in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* and also specifically the equality of *jīva* and Brahman in respect of *bhoga.*[1] It is, therefore, more appropriate for the Sūtrakāra to speak of the status of *jīva* after attaining Brahman rather than the quantum of *bhoga* to be experienced by the *jīva*. As regards the issue relating to the term *avibhāga* namely whether *jīva* becomes identical with Brahman or remains distinct from it, it may be observed that nowhere in the *Brahmasūtra jīva* and Brahman are regarded as identical. Hence the explanation offered by Rāmānuja seems to reflect the view of Bādarāyaṇa. The concept of body-soul relationship or *śarīra-śarīri bhāva* between *jīva* and Brahman adopted by Rāmānuja to interpret the term *avibhāga* is supported by Bādarāyaṇa who regards *jīva* as *aṁśa* of Brahman[2] and also by the *Antaryāmī Brāhmaṇa* of *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad.*

The specific *svarūpa* or the intrinsic nature of *jīva* that manifests itself after reaching Brahman is discussed in detail in a separate *adhikaraṇa* known as Brāhmādhikaraṇa comprising three *sūtras* in which Bādarāyaṇa expresses his own view on the subject more explicitly along with the views of Jaimini and Auḍulomi. According to the view held by Jaimini, *jīva* manifests itself with all the essential attributes described in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* in respect of Brahman. The relevant *sūtra* reads: *brāhmeṇa jaiminiḥ upanyāsādibhyaḥ.*[3] The word *brāhmeṇa* refers to the attributes described in respect of Brahman. The word *upanyāsa* means what is stated in the Upaniṣad. In the passage of *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* dealing with the nature of the Supreme Goal to be attained by *jīva* after liberation from bondage, its earlier part describes Brahman as *apahatapāpma satyakāma, satyasaṁkalpa*, etc., while the later part of the same passage ascribes all these qualities to *jīvātman* also. It is, therefore, maintained by Jaimini that *jīvātman* also possesses all these qualities as part of its intrinsic nature. These were not manifest in the state of its bondage. But when *jīva* is freed from bondage it manifests itself with all these qualities. There is no difference of opinion between Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja on this point except the fact that Śaṁkara regards the attribution of these qualities to *jīva* is to be understood from the empirical standpoint (*vyāvahārika*).

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[1] *VS*, IV.4.21: *Bhoga mātra sāmya liṅgācca.*

[2] *VS*, II.3.43.

[3] *VS*, IV.4.5.

According to Auḍulomi, *jīva* manifests itself in its true nature which is pure consciousness only. The *sūtra* reads: *citi-tanmātreṇa tadātmakatvāt iti auḍulomiḥ.*[1] *Cit* means consciousness or knowledge. *Citi-tanmātra* means that the self is constituted of only consciousness. Hence, it manifests itself in the state of *mukti* as consciousness only. There are Upaniṣadic statements which describe the self as a mass of intelligence (*prajñāna ghana eva*), similar to the lump of salt. The text which speaks of qualities such as *apahata-pāpma, satyasaṁkalpa*, etc. do not really belong to the self as these are falsely attributed to it on account of *upādhi* or adjuncts (*upādhi sambandhādhīnatvāt teṣām na caitanya svarūpatva saṁbhavaḥ*).[2]

Bādarāyaṇa expresses his own view on this subject. The concerned *sūtra* reads: *evamapi upanyāsāt pūrva-bhāvād avirodham Bādarāyaṇaḥ.*[3] The last two words of the *sūtra* which are unambiguous indicate that in the opinion of Bādrāyaṇa there is no conflict (*avirodha*) between the two views advanced by Jaimini and Auḍulomi. The reason for maintaining such a compromising stand is given in the three words of the earlier part of the *sūtra*. These are not very clear and, therefore, have given room for two different explanations by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja. Śaṁkara states that even if we accept that the self in reality is constituted of only consciousness (*evamapi*), there is no conflict in admitting, from the empirical standpoint, the characteristics of Brahman described earlier in respect of *jīva* (*vyavahārāpekṣayā pūrvasya upanyāsādibhyo avagatasya*).[4] In the opinion of Śaṁkara, Bādarāyaṇa is in favour of Auḍulomi and he compromises it with the view of Jaimini by advancing the theory of two grades of reality, namely *pāramārthika* and *vyāvahārika*, or transcendental and empirical. That is from the ultimate point of view *jīva* manifests in the state of *mokṣa* as pure consciousness but from the empirical point of view *jīva* possesses the attributes described in the Upaniṣad.

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[1] *VS*, IV.4.6.

[2] See *SB*, IV.4.6.

[3] *VS*, IV.4.7.

[4] *SB*, IV.4.7.

According to Rāmānuja's interpretation, Bādarāyaṇa is of the view that although the soul is described as essentially of the nature of consciousness, there is no contradiction in admitting in respect of it the attributes such as *satyakāmatva* etc. as stated in the earlier *sūtra* because these are present in the soul as warranted by the authoritative Upaniṣad. In other words, what is essentially of the nature of consciousness can also possess other qualities. In the absence of any conflict, there is no justification to resort to the theory that the attributes are superimposed on *jīvātman* due to *avidyā* for the purpose of reconciling the conflict. In respect of the lump of salt, cited as an illustration by the Upaniṣad, what is meant is that there is no part of it that is devoid of salt element but it does not rule out other qualities such as its shape, hardness, colour, etc. In the same way when the Upaniṣad says that the self is a mass of intelligence, it only implies that it is entirely of the nature of knowledge and that there is no non-sentient element in it. But as scripture declares, it also possesses attributes such as *apahata-pāpmatva, satyasaṁkalpatva*, etc. Thus, Bādarāyaṇa reconciles the two conflicting views expressed by Jaimini and Auḍulomi.

Madhva takes a different stand in interpreting these important *sūtras*. He is of the view that these *sūtras* refer to the *bhoga* or experience of the bliss of the Brahman by the *jīva* in the state of *mukti* rather than the nature of manifestation of *jīva* after attaining Brahman as is evident in the opening *sūtra* of the fourth *pāda*. The question is raised, as a possible objection of the *pūrvapakṣa*, how *jīva* who has no body either gross or subtle can enjoy *bhoga*. According to Madhva's interpretation, Jaimini advances the view that *jīvas* enjoy *bhoga* along with their *cid-dehas*, which in the state of *sāyujya mukti* abides in the body of Brahman. He quotes in support of this view some Śrutis (*Mādhyandinayana* and *Bṛhattantra*)[1] which are not extant. Auḍulomi, on other hand, holds that *sāyujya muktas* have some external *bhogas* too through their *svarūpa-cid-deha* itself which is composed of pure intelligence. Bādarāyaṇa in the opinion of

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[1] *MSB*, IV.4.5. See also Vadiraja's *Tattva-prakāśika-gurvārtha-dīpikā*, p. 176. *Svadehena brahma dehena ca bhogāvirodham bhagavān bādarāyaṇo manyante.*

Madhva, approves both the views. According to him the *sāyujya mukta* receives sacramental blessing, so to say from the body and limbs of Brahman in order to be able to enjoy his small bit of *bhoga* enjoyed by Brahman with his own *cid-deha.*[1]

What is the correct view of Bādarāyaṇa on this subject? The three *sūtras* of Brāhmādhikaraṇa are devoted to discuss the *svarūpa* of *jīva* when it attains Brahman and not the subject related to the experience of *bhoga* in the state of *mukti* as Madhva assumes. Both Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja have brought out the import of the *sūtra* more correctly than Madhva. There is, however, a difference of opinion between them only with regard to the manner in which Bādarāyaṇa reconciles the views of Jaimini and Auḍulomi. Śaṁkara taking his stand on his metaphysical position adopts the theory of *avidyā* and the two levels of reality namely *pāramārthika* and *vyāvahārika* to reconcile the conflict. Though this may appear to be a satisfactory way of overcoming the apparent conflict between Jaimini and Auḍulomi, we cannot say categorically that Bādarāyaṇa subscribes to this explanation for the obvious reason that no where in *Brahmasūtra* there is any mention of Śaṁkara's theory of *avidyā.* In view of this it is appropriate to conlcude that Rāmānuja's interpretation reflects Bādarāyaṇa's view. In other words, according to Bādarāyaṇa, *mukta* or the released soul in the state of *mokṣa* reveals itself in its natural form along with all the inherent attributes such as *apahata-pāpmatva satyasaṁkalpatva* etc. This view is also supported by the passage of *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* dealing with *daharavidyā* and on its basis the Sūtrakāra himself states, as we have explained earlier, that the *jīvātman* manifests itself with the eight attributes mentioned in the passage.[2]

The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* describes that the *jīva* in the state of *mukti* performs certain physical activities and is also capable of fulfilling whatever the individual desires. Thus says the Upaniṣad: "He moves about there laughing, playing, rejoicing, be it with women, or chariots or relatives." Another text states: "If he desires the world of fathers, by his mere will the fathers raise to receive him."[3] Two questions arise in this connection. First, does the *jīva* fulfil all its desires out of its own will or with some effort as in the case of ordinary human beings? Secondly, does the released soul possess a body and sense organs to perform the physical activities? Bādarāyaṇa answers these questions. Regarding the first question he states that the *jīva* fulfils its desires purely out of will and no additional effort is needed for the purpose. The reason for holding this view is that this fact is established by the Śruti texts. The relevant *sūtra* reads: *saṁkalpād eva tu tacchruteḥ.*[1] All the commentators are agreed on this point. Regarding the second point Bādarāyaṇa first mentions the views of Bādari and Jaimini and later on advances his own view. According to Bādari, the liberated soul does not possess any body (*abhāvaṁ bādariḥ āha hi evam*).[2] Jaimini holds the view on the strength of the scriptural text that it possesses a body and sense-organs (*bhavaṁ jaiminiḥ vikalpa āmananāt*).[3] Bādarāyaṇa reconciles both the views on the ground that it depends on the will of the liberated soul. The *sūtra* reads: *dvādaśāhavat ubhaya-vidham bādarāyaṇo ataḥ.*[4] It means that in the opinion of Bādarāyaṇa that the soul can assume a body if it so wills; it can also remain without a body if it so wills as in the case of the twelve days' sacrifice known as *dvādaśāha.* The scriptural texts enjoin the same sacrifice in two different ways, depending on the purpose for which it is to be undertaken. In one case, the person who desires to acquire prosperity should himself perform it. In that case it is named as *satra.* In the case of the person who desires offspring, it is to be performed through the media of the priest. Then the same *yāga* is named as *ahina.* When the *jīva* functions with the body, its experience is similar to that of the waking state (*bhāve jāgradvat*).[5] When the *jīva* functions without a body, its experience is similar to the state of dream (*tanvabhāve sandhyāvat upapatteḥ*).[6]

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[1] See B.N.K. Sharma, *The Brahmasūtras,* vol. 3, p. 775.

[2] *VS,* I.3.19 acc. *SB,* and I.3.18 acc. *RB, Uttarāt cet āvirbhūtasvarūpastu.* See *supra,* ch. 3, pp. 52-53.

[3] *Ch. Up.,* VIII.2.1; 12.3.

The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad,* quoted by Śaṁkara, states that the released soul secures the full glory of Brahman (*āpnoti svārājyam*). The *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad,* quoted by Rāmānuja, says that the soul free from evil attains highest equality (*nirañjanaḥ paramam sāmyam upaiti*). With reference to such statements the question is raised whether *jīva* enjoys an equal status with Brahman and experiences the full glory (*aiśvaryam*) of Brahman in the state of *mokṣa.* This is an important point related to the *mokṣa* and it is covered in the concluding portion of *Brahmasūtra* under the Jagatvyāpārādhikaraṇa comprising six *sūtras* according to Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja. Madhva has grouped these *sūtras* under three separate *adhikaraṇas.* Bādarāyaṇa states in clear terms that the *jīva* enjoys the glory of Brahman except the Lordship relating to cosmic functions. The relevant *sūtra* reads: *jagadvyāpāravarjaṁ prakaraṇāt asannihitatvācca.*[1] The word *jagat-vyāpāra* is interpreted by Śaṁkara as the function of creation, sustenance and dissolution of the universe (*jagat-utpattyādivyāpāraṁ*). Rāmānuja explains this term as the power of controlling the existence and activities of all sentient and non-sentient entities in the universe (*nikhila cetana acetana svarūpasthiti-pravṛtti-bheda-niyamanam*). The *jīva* is denied of this function or power for two reasons. First, the scriptural texts speak of this function only in respect of Brahman (*prakāraṇāt*). Secondly, at the time of creation of the universe by Brahman, the presence of *muktātmā* is not mentioned (*asannihitatvācca*). The function of creation of the universe and the power to control it belong exclusively to *Paramātman* who alone creates it out of His will (*saṁkalpa*) without the aid of anyone else. However the *jīva* enjoys equality with Brahman in the matter of *bhoga* or experience of bliss (*bhoga mātra sāmya liṅgācca*).[2]

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[1] *VS,* IV.4.8.
[2] *VS,* IV.4.10.
[3] *VS,* IV.4.11.
[4] *VS,* IV.4.12.
[5] *VS,* IV.4.14.
[6] *VS,* IV.4.13.

In the concluding *sūtra,* Bādarāyaṇa asserts that once the *jīva* attains Brahman there is no return to the mundane world of bondage because the scriptural text declares such a status for *jīva* (*anāvṛttiḥ śabdāt*). Thus says the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* on the basis of which this *sūtra* is formulated: "The *jīva* does not return to the mundane existence."[3] Thus, the individual self after it is totally liberated from the bondage and attains Brahman, it stays eternally in the spiritual realm of Brahman (*Brahmaloka*) enjoying its glory. Such a state of existence represents *mokṣa,* the supreme Spiritual Goal according to the *Vedāntasūtra.*

THE THEORY OF KRAMA-MUKTI

The views of Bādarāyaṇa on the subject of *mokṣa* are fairly clear from the concluding *adhikaraṇas* and the commentators are also in general agreement with regard to the broad import of the concerned *sūtras*. However, Śaṁkara in his comments, takes the view on the basis of his metaphysical stand that the theory of *mokṣa* advanced by Bādarāyaṇa in these *sūtras* is related to the attainment of the *Saguṇa* Brahman or lower Brahman. The attainment of *Saguṇa* Brahman by means of *upāsanā* on it does not constitute the *mokṣa* proper. The proper *mokṣa* consists in the realization the absolute identity of the individual self with the *Nirguṇa* Brahman (*Atmaikya-jñāna*). This view which would amount to the admission of two stages of *mukti* or release by gradual steps (*krama mukti*) is advanced by Śaṁkara on the basis of the acceptance of two modes of Brahman as *Saguṇa* and *Nirguṇa*. One who meditates on *Saguṇa* Brahman attains it after one is totally liberated from bondage, through the *arcirādi mārga* as described in the Upaniṣads. Only such an individual enjoys the glory of Brahman and will not return to the mundane existence. But the attainment of such a state does not represent the true *mokṣa*. True *mokṣa*, according to Śaṁkara, is the realization of the identity with *Nirguṇa* Brahman. This can be attained as and when an individual obtains the *ātmaikya-jñāna*. Such an individual does not have to pass through *arcirādi mārga*; nor is there for him *utkrānti* or exit of the soul from the body. With the direct realization of absolute identity of *jīvātman* and Brahman, he becomes released from bondage straightaway.

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[1] *VS,* IV.4.17.

[2] *VS,* IV.4.21.

[3] *Ch. Up.,* VIII.15.1: *Na ca punarāvartate.*

Does Bādarāyaṇa support this theory in his *Vedāntasūtra*? Are there any *sūtras* which either directly or indirectly refer to it?

In the third *pāda* of fourth *adhyāya* which deals with the divine path (*arcirādi mārga*) through which the released soul traverses to the abode of Brahman, there is one *adhikaraṇa* named as Karyādhikaraṇa. The *sūtras* use the term *kārya* denoting a higher realm to which the souls liberated from bondage are lead by *Amānava Puruṣa*, a divine person. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣadic* text states: *sa yenan brahma gamayati.*[1] It means, taking the context of the text, that *Amānava Puruṣa* takes the liberated soul to *Brahma-loka*. Presumably with reference to this passage, Bādarāyaṇa expresses the views of two earlier Ācāryas, Bādari and Jaimini along with his own, in order to determine what the word *Brahma* mentioned in the Upaniṣad stands for. The *sūtra* in which the view of Bādari is expressed uses the word *kāryaṁ*. The relevant *sūtra* reads: *kāryaṁ bādariḥ asya*

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[1] *Ch. Up.*, IV.15.5.

gatyupapatteḥ.[1] It means, as interpreted by Śaṁkara, that according to Bādari, it is the lower Brahman (*apara*) or *Saguṇa* Brahman, because the soul traversing through the divine path (*gati*) is understandable only in respect of *Saguṇa* Brahman. The main reason given by Śaṁkara for advancing such an interpretation is that *Nirguṇa* Brahman, which is infinite and all pervasive (*sarvagata*) cannot be conceived to have location (*pradeśa*) or an abode of its own. Hence the term *kāryaṁ* referred to in this *sūtra* means *apara* Brahman. The word Brahman in a secondary sense is also applicable to *apara* Brahman.

Jaimini takes the word Brahma referred to in the Upaniṣad in its primary sense as the *para* Brahman. Thus reads the *sūtra, paraṁ jaiminiḥ mukhyatvāt.*[2] He refutes the view of Bādari and asserts on the strength of the Upaniṣads that the souls liberated from bondage are lead to *para* Brahman and not *kārya* Brahman (*na ca kārye pratipattyabhisandhiḥ*).

The two views are opposed to each other. Which one represents the opinion of Bādarāyaṇa? Bādarāyaṇa expresses his own view on the subject in the subsequent *sūtra*[3] in which his own name is mentioned. Śaṁkara takes this particular *sūtra* as a reference to a collateral question namely whether or not all those who meditate on *kārya* Brahman are lead to it. In his comments, he states that Jaimini's view in favour of *para* Brahma represents a *pūrvapakṣa*, whereas what is pointed out by Bādari in favour of *kārya* or *apara* Brahma is the final view (*siddhānta*) which is ascribed to Bādarāyaṇa. That is, according to Śaṁkara's explanation, Bādarāyaṇa believes that those who meditate on *Saguṇa* Brahman are lead through *arcirādi mārga* only to the realm of *kārya* Brahman as stated by Bādari. The released souls which have reached *kārya* Brahman would eventually attain *para* Brahman along with Hiraṇyagarbha, the presiding deity of *kārya-loka* at the time of final dissolution of it (*kāryātyaye*) and hence there would be no return to mundane existence for the souls reaching *kārya-brahma loka.* This is what is regarded by Śaṁkara as *krama-mukti* or *mukti* in two stages.

Both Rāmānuja and Madhva do not agree with the explanation of Śaṁkara. Firstly, the word *kārya* in the *sūtra* does not refer to

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[1] *VS*, IV.3.7.

[2] *VS*, IV.3.12.

[3] *VS*, IV.3.15 acc. *SB*. See also *infra*, p. 137, n. 1.

kārya Brahman or *Saguṇa* Brahman as different from *Nirguṇa* or *para* Brahman. The issue involved here is whether those who meditate on the Hiraṇyagarbha, a lower Vedic deity, who is the same as *caturmukha brahmā* entrusted with the task of actual creation of the universe would reach Brahman through *arcirādi mārga*? The view expressed by Bādari represents the *pūrvapakṣa*. The view expressed by Jaimini represents another theory emphasizing that only those who meditate on *para* Brahman can reach it through *arcirādi mārga* and not those who meditate on lower deities such as Hiraṇyagarbha or even Brahman conceived as a symbol (*pratīka*). In the opinion of Rāmānuja and Madhva, both the views represent *pūrvapakṣa* and Bādarāyaṇa does not accept either of it, since they are defective. Bādarāyaṇa states his own view in the *sūtra* which reads: *apratikālambanān nayatīti bādarāyaṇa ubhayathā ca doṣāt tatkratuśca.*[1] This crucial *sūtra* which is introduced by Bādarāyaṇa for the purpose of offering his own view on the subject of what kind of meditation leads to Brahman, against the defective or partial views of Bādari and Jaimini is explained differently by the commentators. We need not go into all these details. Our main concern is to determine whether Bādarāyaṇa favours the theory of two stages of *mukti* as conceived by Śaṁkara. The relevant *sūtra* in which Bādarāyaṇa explicitly expresses his view as against conflicting theories of Bādari and Jaimini does not favour it. Further, if the theory of two Brahmans *para* and *apara*, as strongly defended by Śaṁkara is tenable, then the *krama-mukti* or *mukti* in two stages would be sustainable. But, as we have observed elsewhere in chapter 4, Bādarāyaṇa does not accept it. Hence, the theory of *krama-mukti* is not acceptable to Bādarāyaṇa.

In conclusion, it may be observed that on the basis of an objective evaluation of the *sūtras* of the fourth *adhyāya* designated as *phalādhāya* and in particular the concluding *pāda* devoted to the discussion of the nature of *mokṣa*, Bādarāyaṇa is of the view that the individual soul, after it is liberated from bondage through the means of unceasing meditation on Brahman attains it through the *arcirādi mārga* as described in the Upaniṣad, and enjoys for ever, the glory of Brahman without return to the mundane existence.

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[1] *VS*, IV.3.14: This is the reading of the *sūtra* according to Rāmānuja and Madhva. The version in *SB*, (IV.3.15) deletes the word *ca* after *ubhayayathā* and the *doṣāt* is read as *adoṣāt*.

Chapter 9

The Vedāntasūtras and the Upaniṣads

In the preceding chapters we have presented the philosophy of Vedānta as adumbrated by Bādarāyaṇa in the *Brahmasūtra* on the basis of the study of the selected *adhikaraṇas* which have a direct bearing on the five doctrines of Vedānta, viz., (1) the nature of Brahman, (2) the nature of the universe and its relation to Brahman, (3) the nature of *jīva* and its relation to Brahman, (4) the *sādhana* to attain Brahman, and (5) the Supreme Spiritual Goal. It is acknowledged by all that the *Brahmasūtra* is the basic manual of Vedānta as it systematizes the teachings contained in the Upaniṣads. In fact the term Vedānta originally signified only the Upaniṣads[1] and the commentators often use it in that sense. In view of this fact, the philosophy contained in the *Vedāntasūtras* is to be accepted as truly representing the system of Vedānta or Vedānta-*darśana*, similar to the Nyāya-*darśana* based on the *Nyāyasūtras*. However some scholars, both ancient and modern, have expressed the doubt as to whether the *sūtras* of Bādarāyaṇa truly represent the Vedānta Philosophy as enunciated in the Upaniṣads. This doubt arises since some of the important doctrines advanced by the commentators in their scholarly *Bhāṣyas* on the *Vedāntasūtra* appear to be at variance with those found in the Upaniṣads. Such variations can be conspicuously noticed in the *Śaṁkara Bhāṣya* on the *sūtras*. Thus, for instance, the *sūtras* as they are worded do not explicitly state that Brahman is devoid of all characteristics (*nirviśeṣa*). Nor do they refer to the identity of *jīva* and Brahman and the illusory character (*mithyātva*) of the universe. But Śaṁkara imposes these views on the *sūtras* on the strength of certain Upaniṣadic texts. He seeks to justify the adoption of such an interpretation on the assumption that the Upaniṣad, being the Revealed Scripture, is of greater authority than the *sūtras* and the import conveyed by the Upaniṣadic texts is to be accepted in preference to the apparent meaning of the *sūtras*, whenever there is a conflict between them.[1] As the *sūtras* are couched in such an ambiguous words as would allow for more than one meaning, a commentator is free to draw a meaning other than what is expressly apparent. If we accept this position, we are confronted with the question whether Bādarāyaṇa deviates from the teachings of the Upaniṣads in respect of some of the major controversial doctrines such as the nature of Brahman as *nirviśeṣa*, the relation of Brahman to *jīva* as one of non-difference and the ontological status of the universe as *mithyā*. Prima facie, this cannot be the case. If Bādarāyaṇa differed from the Upaniṣads, then the *Vedāntasūtra* which is regarded as the basic manual of Vedānta system cannot be accepted to represent the *Aupaniṣada-mata* or the Philosophy of the Upaniṣads. It is, therefore, important for us to know whether or not the *Vedāntasūtra* of Bādarāyaṇa fully conforms to the teachings of the Upaniṣads. The present chapter is devoted to the consideration of this important isssue.

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[1] See *supra*, p. 9, n. 3.

In examining this matter, the first question that arises is whether the Upaniṣads teach one coherent system of Philosophy and whether the same is also reflected in the Bādarāyaṇa's *sūtras*? Though the traditional scholars answer it in the affirmative, modern scholars are divided in their opinion on this issue. Some are of the view that the Upaniṣads teach not one but many systems of doctrines. Some scholars are of the opinion that the older Upaniṣads advocate a Philosophy of idealistic Monism, while others contend that they present theistic Monism. In order to determine the correct position, the entire Upaniṣads need to be studied in detail. But this task cannot be undertaken in this book as its scope is limited to delineate the Philosophy of Bādarāyaṇa as adumbrated in the *Vedāntasūtras*. We shall, therefore, confine our attention to the examination of the selected Upaniṣadic statements which are quoted by the commentators in support of the following five controversial issues of Vedānta with a view to finding out whether or not there is any difference in respect of these doctrines between the Upaniṣadic texts and the views expressed in Bādarāyaṇa's *sūtras*:

1. Is Brahman *nirviśeṣa* or *saviśeṣa*?

[1] See *SB*, I.1.19: *Sūtrāṇi tu evaṁ vākhyeyāni....* See also Bhāmatī, *veda sūtrayoḥ virodhe 'guṇe tvānyakalpanā' iti sūtrāṇi anyathā netavyam.*

2. Are *jīva* and Brahman identical or different?
3. Is the universe caused by Brahman illusory or real?
4. Is the direct means to the attainment of Brahman *upāsanā* (meditation) or is it *jñāna* (knowledge of Brahman)?
5. In the state of *mukti* does the *jīva* become one with Brahman or it retains its individuality?

As in the case of the *sūtras,* the concerned Upaniṣadic texts are couched in such ambiguous terms as would allow for more than one interpretation and it would, therefore, be difficult to determine the correct import of these texts. We do have to depend on the commentaries to understand their meaning. But the interpretations of the commentators differ radically. The classic example is the oft quoted statement *tat-tvamasi.* Despite these difficulties, it should be possible to determine the true purport of the concerned Upaniṣadic statements on the basis of an objective evaluation of the comments of the three *ācāryas*—Śaṁkara, Rāmānuja and Madhva—and also by taking into consideration the canons of interpretation laid down by the Mīmāṁsakas and in particular the context in which the concerned Upaniṣadic statement is made. This would enable us to arrive at a conclusion regarding the import of the Upaniṣadic passage and on the basis of it, to assess whether it differs from the import of the *sūtras.*

THE DOCTRINE OF BRAHMAN

There is no dispute among the Vedāntins that the doctrine of Brahman as the Ultimate Reality and the primary cause of the universe constitutes the central theme of the Upaniṣads. The controversy arises with regard to its nature. The question that is raised in this connection is whether Brahman is *nirviśeṣa* or devoid of all characteristics or it is *saviśeṣa* or qualified with attributes. We have already noticed in the earlier chapters that most of the *sūtras* dealing with the nature of Brahman describe it as *saviśeṣa.* But Śaṁkara, though he accepts this fact, remarks in his comments that what is referred to in the *sūtras* is *apara* or lower Brahman intended for the purpose of meditation (*upāsanā*), as distinct from *para* or higher Brahman which is absolutely devoid of all determinations. According to him, there are two conceptions of Brahman—*para* and *apara.* That is, the same one Brahman which in reality is *nirguṇa* is conceived by the Upaniṣads as *saguṇa* due to its association with limiting adjuncts caused by *avidyā* for the purpose of meditation.[1]

Śaṁkara postulates two levels of philosophical conceptions—higher or transcendental point of view(*pāramārthika*) and lower or empirical standpoint (*vyāvahārika*). Brahman looked at from the transcendental standpoint is absolutely undifferentiated (*nirviśeṣa*) and the same Brahman conceived from the empirical point of view is endowed with attributes (*saviśeṣa*). It is claimed by the Advaitins that the Upaniṣads present both the acosmic and cosmic conceptions of Brahman.[2]

We have discussed this matter in chapter 4 and we have seen that Bādarāyaṇa does not refer to two Brahmans, *para* and *apara*, as conceived by Śaṁkara. According to him, there is only one Brahman which is generally described as *saviśeṣa* or one as qualified with characteristics. Only in one *sūtra*, where Brahman is described as *ubhayaliṅga*, he refers to the twofold characteristic of Brahman for the reason that this constitutes the purport of all the Upaniṣads.[3] But Śaṁkara interprets this *sūtra* differently. He takes the view that the Upaniṣads teach two forms of Brahman, one as *saviśeṣa* and the other as *nirviśeṣa*. Both cannot be accepted as they are mutually opposed. If either one is to be admitted, Śaṁkara favours the *nirviśeṣatva* of Brahman, since in his opinion that constitutes the main purport of all the Upaniṣads. If this conclusion is correct, there would be disagreement between the Upaniṣads and *Brahmasūtra*. We, therefore, have to examine if the Upaniṣadic texts quoted by Śaṁkara lend support to the *niviśeṣa-brahmavāda*.

Does the Upaniṣad teach two Brahmans? The terms *para brahma* and *apara brahma* are mentioned only in the *Praśna Upaniṣad* in connection with the meditation on the mystic syllable *aum* for attaining Brahman. In reply to the question posed by Satyakāma to the sage Pippalāda, the latter states: *etad vai, satyakāma, paraṁ ca aparaṁ brahma, yad aum-kāraḥ, tasmād vidvān etainaiva āyatanenaikataram anveti.*[4] It means: "That which is the syllable *aum*, O Satyakāma, is verily the higher and the lower Brahman. Therefore, with this support alone does the wise man reach the one or the other."

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[1] *SB*, I.2.14: *Nirguṇamapi sad brahma nāmarūpagataiḥ guṇaiḥ saguṇaṁ upāsanārthaṁ tatra upadiśyata.* See also *SB*, I.2.20: *Ekasyaiva tu bhedavyavahāraḥ upādhikṛtaḥ yathā ghaṭākāśa mahākāśa iti.* See also *SB*, I.3.19: *Eka eva parameśvaraḥ kūṭastha nityo vijñānadhātuḥ māyayā māyāvival anekadha vibhāvyate.*

[2] See *SB*, I.1.12: *Dvirūpam hi brahma avagamyate, nāmarūpavikārabheda-upādhi-viśiṣṭam tadviparītaṁ ca sarvopādhi-vivarjitam.*

[3] *VS*, III.2.11: *Na sthānato'pi parasya ubhayaliṅgam sarvatra hi.*

[4] *Praśna Up.*, V.2.

According to Śaṁkara's interpretation, this statement distinguishes between the unqualified Brahman (*para*) and the qualified Brahman (*apara*). The fuller implication of this text is discussed by the commentators in connection with the comments on the *Vedāntasūtra* which states that the object of attainment by those who meditate on the syllable *aum* is Brahman (*ikṣatikarma vyapadeśāt saḥ*).[1] Śaṁkara takes that Brahman referred to in the *sūtra* is not the higher Brahman since it cannot be the object of *īkṣati-karma* and it is, therefore, applicable to the lower Brahman or Hiraṇyagarbha, the Vedic deity, who in a secondary sense is regarded as Brahman. But if we go by the wording of the *sūtra* and also what is stated in the *Praśna Upaniṣad*, there is no room to accept two Brahmans. According to the Upaniṣad, meditation on one element of *aum* (*eka-mātra*) leads to worldly prosperity. Meditation on the two elements of *aum* confers heavenly felicity. The meditation on the whole of it, inclusive of all the three elements as the symbol of Brahman makes for the realization of the Supreme Being. Accordingly, the *praṇava* is the pathway to achieve earthly and heavenly conditions and also Brahman, which is the Supreme Goal. The Upaniṣadic statement does not, therefore, speak of two Brahmans as conceived by Śaṁkara. Nor does Bādarāyaṇa acknowledge two Brahmans.

The *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* also uses the terms *para* and *apara* with reference to two types of *vidyā* or knowlwdge but it does not refer to *para* and *apara* Brahma. The relevant text states, after mentioning what *aparā vidyā* stands for, that the *akṣara* or the Imperishable Reality is known by *parā vidyā*.[2] Śaṁkara takes the term *parā vidyā* as the Upaniṣads by means of which the knowledge of higher Brahman is attained. The terms *parā* and *aparā vidyās* do not necessarily mean higher and lower Brahmans but on the contrary, as explained by Rāmānuja, they refer to two kinds of knowledge, viz., mediate knowledge (*parokṣa jñāna*) derived from the study of the sacred texts including the Upaniṣads and direct or intuitive knowledge obtained from the unceasing meditation on Brahman (*yoga janya jñāna*).

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[1] *VS*, I.3.13 acc. *SB* and I.3.12 acc. *RB*.

[2] See *Muṇḍ. Up.*, I.1.4 & 5: *Dve vidye veditavye iti ha sma yad brahmavido vadanti parā caiva aparā ca...aparā ṛgvedo yajurvedaḥ sāmavedo atharvavedaḥ, śikṣā...atha parā yayā, tadakṣaram adhigamyate.*

The Upaniṣads do however describe Brahman in terms of negative attributes and also positive attributes. The text drawn from the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* which is often quoted by Śaṁkara in favour of *Nirguṇa* Brahman states: "That which is imperceptible, ungraspable, without family, without caste, without sight or hearing, without hands or feet, eternal, all-pervading, omniscient, exceedingly subtle, that is the imperishable (*akṣara*) which the wise perceives as the source of beings (*bhūtayoni*).[1]

This statement taken without the context appears to deny certain qualities such as perceptibility, physical forms, etc. in respect of Brahman which is described as *akṣara* and *bhūtayoni*. But the same Upaniṣadic passage in which this statement appears, mentions in the later part of it that it is *sarvajña* or all-knowing and *sarvavit* or all-wise. The two attributes, *sarvajñatva* and *sarvavittva*, exclude the possibility of the *akṣara* being regarded as *nirviśeṣa* Brahman. The *sūtra* which is framed on the basis of this text states that Brahman is characterized by the qualities of *adṛśyatva* etc. (*adṛśyatvādi-guṇakaḥ dharmokteḥ*). Śaṁkara also acknowledges that the *bhūtayoni* qualified by such attributes is the *parameśvara* (The Supreme Ruler).[2] It cannot, therefore, be said that this Upaniṣadic text supports the theory of *nirviśeṣa* Brahman.

One other statement of *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* describes *akṣara* (Brahman) in negative terms. It states: "It is neither gross nor fine, neither short nor long, neither red nor adhesive. It is neither shadow nor darkness, neither air nor space, unattached, without taste, without smell, without eyes, without ears, without voice, without mind, without radiance, without breath, without mouth, without measure, having no within and no without. It eats nothing and no one eats it."[3] But the very next sentence in this passage speaks of *akṣara* as the one which sustains or holds together the entire universe from earth to the subtlest unmanifest *ākāśa*. It also describes in vivid terms that everything in the universe is commanded by it (*praśāsana*).[4] The attribution of *dhṛtitva* and *praśāsanatva* rules out the possibility of regarding *akṣara* as absolutely *nirviśeṣa.* The Sūtrakāra himself acknowledges this fact in the two *sūtras* reading as: *akṣaram aṁbarāntadhṛteḥ* and *sā ca praśāsanāt.*[1]

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[1] *Muṇḍ. Up.*, I.1.6. see *supra*, p. 35, n. 4.

[2] *SB*, I.2.21: *Yo adṛśyatvādiguṇaka bhūtayoniḥ parameśvara eva syāt na anyat.*

[3] *Bṛ. Up.*, III.8.8. See *supra*, p. 36, n. 1.

[4] See *Bṛ. Up.*, III.8.9: *Etasya va akṣarasya praśasane, gargi, surya-candramasau vidhṛtau tiṣṭhataḥ....*

There are two other Upaniṣadic statements in the *Śvetāśvatara* which, prima facie, convey the idea of *nirguṇa* Brahman. The first one reads: *eko devaḥ sarva-bhūteṣu gūḍhaḥ sarva-vyāpi sarva-bhūtāntarātma; karmādhyakṣaḥ sarvabhūtādivāsaḥ sākṣī cetā kevalo nirguṇaśca.*[2] It means, according to Śaṁkara: “The one hidden in all beings, all-pervading, the Inner Self of all beings, the witness, the knower, the only one, devoid of all qualities (*nirguṇa*).” The other statement is: *niṣkalaṁ niṣkriyaṁ śāntaṁ niravadyaṁ nirañjanam amṛtasya paraṁ setuṁ dagdhendhanam ivanalam.*[3] It means, according to Śaṁkara's interpretation: “To him who is without parts, without activity, tranquil, irreproachable, without blemish, the highest bridge to immortality like fire with its fuel burnt.” Since the words *nirguṇa niṣkriya* and *niṣkala* appear in these two statements, Śaṁkara often quotes them in support of his theory of *Nirguṇa* Brahman.

Do these texts really prove that Brahman is absolutely devoid of all characteristics? The terms *nirguṇa* etc., do not imply the negation of all attributes in respect of Brahman. The same texts describe Brahman as *antarātmā* or Inner Controller of all beings. The controllership (*yamayitṛtva*) is a distinguishing characteristic of Brahman, as stated by Bādarāyaṇa in the Antaryāmyadhikaraṇa.[4] Śaṁkara also admits this fact (*yamayitṛtvam dharma upapadyate*). The term *nirguṇa* can be understood in the sense that Brahman is devoid of material qualities (*prakṛtiguṇa*) such as *sattva, rajas* and *tamas.* The term *niṣkala* means that Brahman is devoid of bodily form (*śarīra sāmānya niṣedhaḥ*). Similarly, the term *niṣkriya* means that it is free from self-efffort (*kriyā-sāmānya niṣedhaḥ*). Since it is possible to interpret these terms as denoting Brahman free from defective physical limitations (*prākṛata heyaguṇa niṣedhaḥ*), as Rāmānuja and Madhva have explained, it cannot be concluded on the basis of these few statements that Brahman is devoid of all determinations (*nirviśeṣa*).

We have also to take into consideration the fact that a large number of Upaniṣadic texts describe Brahman as qualified with attributes. The *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* says: *yaḥ sarvajñaḥ sarvavit.* That is Brahman is omniscient and knower of everything. The *Chāndogya* speaks of Brahman as *manomaya* or consisting of mind, *prāṇamaya* or one having *prāṇa* as its body *satyasaṅkalpaḥ* or one whose will is unobstructed, *satyakāmaḥ* or one whose needs are self-fulfilled. The *Śvetāśvatara* mentions that Brahman possesses unsurpassing power, and the knowledge, valour and action are its natural characteristics.[1] Śaṁkara also acknowledges that the Upaniṣads speak of Brahman as endowed with qualities and also as devoid of qualities. These are regarded as *saguṇa* and *nirguṇa* Śrutis. Bādarāyaṇa takes note of the two types of Śrutis when he mentions in the *sūtra* the term *ubhayaliṅga* or the twofold character of Brahman.

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[1] *VS,* I.3.10 & 11.

[2] *Śv. Up.,* VI.11.

[3] *Śv. Up.,* VI.19.

[4] See *VS,* I.2.18: *Antaryāmyadhidaivādiṣu tad-dharma vyapadeśāt.*

The issue which needs to be settled in interpreting the two apparently conflicting statements is whether both the texts have to be accepted as of equal validity or either of them. Śaṁkara takes the stand that since both are opposed to each other, only one of them is to be admitted and in that case, the *nirguṇa* Śrutis are to be accepted since in his opinion they convey the main purport of the Upaniṣads. He reconciles the two sets of scriptural texts by maintaining the view that all *saguṇa* Śrutis are intended to describe Brahman with *guṇas* for the purpose of *upāsanā*. However, the *nirguṇa* Śrutis are of greater validity, because of the logical principle that negation comes later (*para*) than what is affirmed (*vihita*). But this explanation is questioned by the critics of Śaṁkara. This is not the place to go into the details of these criticisms. The important point to be noted for our purpose is that it would be appropriate to accord equal validity to both sets of scriptural texts, both being the part of Revealed Scripture. The *nirguṇa* Śrutis are, therefore, to be interpreted as meaning the denial of *heya guṇas* or Brahman as free from defilements. This interpretation is in consonance with Bādarāyaṇa's view as reflected in the Ubhayaliṅgādhikaraṇa. As we have explained in chapter 4, the relevant *sūtra* states that all the Upaniṣads declare that Brahman possesses twofold characteristic, viz., endowed with attributes and free from defilements. If this explanation of Rāmānuja is accepted, there is no disagreement between the Upaniṣads and Bādarāyaṇa in this respect.

There are a few other crucial Upaniṣadic texts which are frequently referred to by Śaṁkara to emphasize the *nirviśeṣa* character of Brahman. The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* defines Brahman as *satyaṁ*

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[1] *Śv. Up.*, IV.8: *Parāsya śaktiḥ vividhaiva śrūyate svābhāvikī jñāna bala kriyā ca.*

jñānaṁ and *anantaṁ.* It means that Brahman is Reality, Knowledge, Infinitude. These three terms, according to Śaṁkara, denote the very *svarūpa* of Brahman and they are not to be taken as its attributes. Accordingly, Brahman is the very Reality, Knowledge and Infinitude. This is technically known as *akhaṇḍārtha* or that which conveys an impartite, non-relational sense. On the basis of such a view it is contended that Brahman is devoid of all characteristics.

This interpretation is seriously questioned both by Rāmānuja and Madhva. According to them, the three terms stand for the distinguishing attributes of Brahman. In a statement where the terms stand in apposition (*samānādhikaraṇa vākya*) the terms which connote distinctive qualities denote one entity as qualified by those qualities.[1] This is the explanation offered by the grammarian which Rāmānuja has adopted to interpret the co-ordinate judgements. If this statement is taken as a *lakṣaṇa-vākya* or a sentence offering definition, Brahman is defined in terms of its distinguishing characteristics. It is not, therefore, possible to assert on the basis of this text that Brahman is *nirviśeṣa.*

Another crucial Upaniṣadic text of *Chāndogya* which declares that Brahman is absolute one is claimed by Śaṁkara and his followers to establish the theory of Brahman as devoid of all characteristics. The text reads: *sadeva saumya, idam agra asīd, ekameva advitīyam.*[2] It means, according to Śaṁkara, "In the beginning, my dear, this (the world) was Being alone, one only, without a second." The word *sadeva* implies that the manifest universe of name and form was prior to creation, pure Being (*sat*). The word *ekam-eva* implies that there was no second, that is, there was no other object than Being. It signifies *sajātīya bheda* and *svagata bheda,* that is, difference from another similar object and also internal difference in the form of any characteristic as for example, a tree from another similar tree and the same one tree having internal difference such as the leaves, flowers and fruits. The term *advitīya* implies that there is no other object than Being (*nāsyā dvitīyaṁ vastvantaraṁ vidyata ity-advitīyam*). It excludes *vijātīya bheda* or difference of an object from another object of different nature, as for example the tree from a rock.

Does this Upaniṣadic statement deny everything including the characteristics other than Being (Brahman)? If it is interpreted properly with reference to the context and the statements which follow subsequently in the passage, it does not prove the absolute oneness of Brahman as devoid of all determinations, as explained by Rāmānuja. According to the principle of causation accepted by the Vedānta, the effect (*kārya*) is not non-existent prior to its production. This is known as *satkāryavāda*, as contrasted to the *asatkāryavāda* of the Naiyāyikas. Accordingly, the intention of the Upaniṣadic passage dealing with the creation of the universe is to point out that the manifested world of name and form which is an effect (*kārya*) of Brahman existed prior to its creation in an unmanifested form devoid of name and form. This is the implication of the phrase *sadeva idam agra āsīt*. The word *ekam-eva* emphasizes the state of unmanifest form of the universe (*ekāvasthā* or *sūkṣmāvasthā*). This explanation is justified if we take into consideration the later words in the passage, viz., *bahusyāṁ prajāyeyeti*, which implies that what was unmanifest is made manifest by the will of *sat* into the manifold universe of name and form (*nāma rūpa vikāra bahutvāvasthā*). The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* also states explicitly that this universe existed in an unmodified form (*avyākṛtam*) and later on it was made manifest.[1] The word *advitīya* does not imply that *sat* is devoid of both external and internal difference, as contended by Śaṁkara. On the other hand, it signifies that other than Brahman which is the material cause of the universe (*upādāna kāraṇa*) there is no other causal factor such as the instrumental cause (*svavyatirikta nimittāntara niṣedhaḥ*), as is evident from the later statement in which it is said that Brahman itself wills to become many. In other words, the Upaniṣadic text in question points out that Brahman is both *upādāna* and *nimitta kāraṇa*. This fact is also conveyed by Bādarāyaṇa in the *sūtra* by using the word *prakṛtiśca* which means, as interpreted both by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, that Brahman is both *upādāna* and *nimitta kāraṇa*. Further, the definition of Brahman as the cause of the universe implies the admission of attributes such as *sarvajñatva* and *sarvaśaktitva*.

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[1] See *Patañjali Mahābhāṣya: Bhinnapravṛttinimittānāṁ śabdānāṁ ekasmin arthe sāmānādhikaraṇyam.*

[2] *Ch. Up.,* VI.2.1.

According to Madhva also this statement does not deny the existence of a second entity other than Brahman. The word *eka* means that Brahman has no difference with his qualities and actions (*svīya-guṇa karma rupadibheda-hīnam*). The word *advitīya* means that there is no second entity that is equal or superior to Brahman and it does not imply the negation of *svagata-bheda* or internal difference and also *sajātīya-bheda* or external difference from another similar object. Thus, on the basis of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad,* it is not possible to establish that Brahman is *nirguṇa.* Hence there is no incompatibility between the Upaniṣads and the *sūtras* in this respect.

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[1] See *Bṛ. Up.*, I.4.7: *Taddhedaṁ tarhi avyākṛtam asīt tannamarūpābhyam eva vyākriyata.*

There are other Upaniṣadic statements which appear to emphasize the absolute oneness of Brahman and the negation of plurality. These texts are taken by the Advaitins to imply the theory of *nirviśeṣa* Brahman. We shall consider them when we deal with the doctrine of *mithyātva* of the universe.

There are several other arguments which are advanced by the Advaita Vedānta to prove the theory of Brahman as *nirviśeṣa.* As these have no direct bearing on the Upaniṣads, we shall leave them out of our consideration. These are discussed in great detail in the polemical works such as *Śatadūṣaṇī* of Vedānta Deśika and the *Nyāyāmṛta* of Vyāsatīrtha.

THE DOCTRINE OF JĪVA

The theory of *jīva* or the individual self also constitutes an important subject-matter of the Upaniṣads. The Upaniṣads generally acknowledge that *jīva* is a separate entity other than Brahman. There is no dispute among the commentators regarding this point. The controversy arises only with regard to its true nature and its ontological status vis-à-vis Brahman. Regarding its nature, the Upaniṣads point out that it is eternal in character (*nitya*), the knowing subject (*jñātā*), essentially constituted of knowledge (*vijñāna*), the agent of action (*kartā*) and atomic in size (*aṇu*). Thus says the *Praśna Upaniṣad*: *eṣa hi draṣṭā, spraṣṭā, śrotā, ghrātā, rasayitā, mantā, boddhā, kartā, vijñānātmā puruṣaḥ.*[1] It means: "He verily, is the seer, the toucher, the hearer, the smeller, the taster, the perceiver, the knower, the doer, the thinking person." Based on this, Bādarāyaṇa has enunciated in the *sūtras* the nature of *jīva* and hence there is no disagreement between the Upaniṣads and the *sūtras* in this respect.

Regarding the relation of *jīva* to Brahman, the Upaniṣads offer conflicting views. There are sufficiently large number of texts which teach that *jīva* is different from Brahman by virtue of their intrinsic nature. Thus says the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad: jñā jñau dvau ajau īśanīśau.*[1]

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[1] *Praśna Up.*, IV.9.

It means: "There are two unborn ones, the knowing and the unknowing, the one all-powerful, the other powerless." The *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* draws the distinction between the two by the analogy of two birds sitting on the same tree, one eating the fruit and the other looking on passively.[2]

The *Antaryāmī Brāhmaṇa* also emphasizes the distinction between the two when it says that Brahman dwells in the *jīvātman* as its *antaryāmin* or the Inner Controller. Based on these statements, Bādarāyaṇa emphasizes in several *sūtras* that *jīvātman* is different from Brahman.[3] The *sūtras* reading as *adhikaṁ tu bheda nirdeśāt*[4] makes a pointed reference to the difference between the two. Hence, there is no disagreement between the Upaniṣads and the *sūtras* in this respect.

The Upaniṣads also speak of non-difference between *jīva* and Brahman. The most important ones, which are frequently quoted by Śaṁkara to support the theory of identity of *jīva* and Brahman, are the following from the *Chāndogya* and *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* Upaniṣads: *tat-tvam-asi* (thou art that) and *aham brahmāsmi* (I am Brahman). Bādarāyaṇa is fully aware of these statements as is evident from the *sūtra* dealing with the theory of *jīva* as *aṁśa* of Brahman, in which he uses the two expressions: *nānā vyapadeśāt* which suggests that the scriptural texts speak of difference between the two and *anyathā ca* which indicates that they also mention the non-difference between them. We also come across the statements in the Upaniṣads offering analogies such as the fire and its sparks and the flowing rivers and the ocean into which they merge to explain the relationship between the two ontological entities. These convey the idea that there is both difference and non-difference (*bhedābheda*) between them. The *sūtras* also reflect the *bhedābheda* theory when Bādarāyaṇa refers to the views of two ancient *ācāryas*, Auḍulomi and Āśmarathya and also cites the analogies of snake and its coils as well as the luminous body and its luminosity.[5] The Upaniṣads do not state explicitly what the final theory is in this regard. This has, therefore, given room for the advancement of different theories by the commentators regarding the relation of *jīva* to Brahman.

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[1] *Śv. Up.*, I.9.

[2] *Muṇḍ. Up.*, III.1.1, see also *supra*, p. 46, n. 1.

[3] See *supra*, ch. 6, pp. 103-6.

[4] *VS*, II.1.22.

[5] See *supra*, ch. 5, pp. 78-79.

Bādarāyaṇa whose main task was to systematize the teachings of the Upaniṣads has attempted to offer a decisive view on the subject. As explained in the chapter on *jīva*, Bādarāyaṇa states that *jīva* is an *aṁśa* or part of Brahman because of the fact that there are statements in the Upaniṣads emphasizing the difference between them (*nānā vyapadeśāt*) and also there are statements pointing out non-difference between the two (*anyathā ca*). As both the statements have to be accepted as valid, *jīva* is regarded as *aṁśa* of Brahman in the sense that it is inseparably related to Brahman. In another place, while discussing the relation of *jīva* to Brahman, Bādarāyaṇa mentions the term *avasthiti*, which means that Brahman abides permanently in *jīva* as stated in the *Antaryāmī Brāhmaṇa*. If the correct import of these two *sūtras*, as interpreted by Rāmānuja, are taken into consideration, it would follow that *jīva* and Brahman are integrally related in the same way as an essential attribute is inseparably related to its substance. The substance and attribute by virtue of their intrinsic character are different but a substance as inseparably related to the attribute is non-different in the sense of oneness (*viśiṣṭaikya*). The concept of *aṁśa-aṁśi* relation suggested by Bādarāyaṇa is thus intended to reconcile the Śrutis speaking of both difference and non-difference between *jīva* and Brahman. In the light of these *sūtras* the *abheda* Śrutis are to be understood in order to overcome the conflict with the *bheda* Śrutis.

Though Bādarāyaṇa has shown the way to reconcile the conflict, the commentators except Rāmānuja have chosen to interpret the crucial Upaniṣadic texts such as *tat-tvam-asi* in accordance with their pre-conceived doctrines and thereby create the impression that Bādarāyaṇa does not conform to the Upaniṣads by his acceptance of both *bheda* and *abheda* Śrutis in their primary sense. In order to uphold the doctrine of identity of *jīva* and Brahman, Śaṁkara accords greater importance and validity to the *abheda* Śrutis and lesser importance to the *bheda* Śrutis. Accordingly he regards Brahman and *jīva* are identical, whereas difference between them is due to the limiting adjuncts caused by *avidyā*. Madhva as an advocate of *bhedavāda*, accepts *bheda* Śrutis as of greater importance and validity and accords lesser importance to the *abheda* Śrutis which are interpreted in a figurative sense. Accordingly *jīva* and Brahman are absolutely different, whereas the non-difference between them is understood in the sense of similarity or *sādṛśya* in respect of their attributes such as *jñāna* and *ānanda*. Bhāskara advocates the theory of *bhedābheda* or difference and non-difference. *Jīva* and Brahman are identical but due to the limiting adjunct (*upādhi*) which is real unlike Śaṁkara's *avidyā*, Brahman manifests as many *jīvas*, similar to the one ether which is regarded as many when the same is conditioned by several pots. But none of these theories conform to the view of Bādarāyaṇa who admits both *bheda* and *abheda* between *jīva* and Brahman in their primary sense in accordance with the Upaniṣadic teaching. Only Rāmānuja, by faithfully adhering to the views of the Sūtrakāra, accords equal validity and importance to both *abheda* Śrutis and *bheda* Śrutis and reconciles the apparent conflict by upholding the view that *jīva* is a *prakāra* or an integral part of Brahman on the basis of the concept of *aṁśa-aṁśi bhāva* or the relation of the attribute to the substance suggested by Bādarāyaṇa and the *śarīra-śarīri-bhāva* or the relation of body to the soul indicated in the *Antaryāmī Brāhmaṇa*. Brahman and *jīva* are different by virtue of their intrinsic nature like substance and attribute but they are also non-different in the sense that Brahman as a qualified entity (*viśiṣṭa*) is one as inseparably related to the *jīva*. Thus, if the *abheda* Śrutis such as *tat-tvamasi* are interpreted in the light of the *sūtras*, there is no disparity between the views of Bādarāyaṇa and the teaching of the Upaniṣads regarding the theory of *jīva*

THE DOCTRINE OF THE UNIVERSE

The Upaniṣads have also dealt with the theory of the universe. The definition of Brahman by the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* as the cause of the threefold cosmic process and the statement of the *Chāndogya* that Brahman is both the material and instrumental cause of it, the evolution of the primordial cosmic matter (*prakṛti*) into twenty-three evolutes from the unmanifested state into the manifested state of the manifold universe, all bring out the importance accorded by the Upaniṣads to the theory of the universe. The *sūtras* of Bādarāyaṇa which deal with these matters generally follow the teachings of the Upaniṣads.

The nature of the relationship between Brahman and the universe and the ontological status of the universe constitute the major doctrines of Vedānta. The conflicting views expressed by the commentators on these give the impression that there is some disagreement between the *sūtras* and the Upaniṣads. We shall, therefore, confine our attention to the consideration of these to determine the correct position. Regarding the ontological status of the universe, the main issue is whether the universe which is caused by Brahman, is real in character or it is an illusory appearance (*mithyā*)? The Upaniṣads do not state explicitly that it is *mithyā*. Nor does Bādarāyaṇa mention it openly in any of the *sūtras*. In the absence of any categorical statement to this effect either in the Upaniṣads or the *sūtras*, Rāmānuja and Madhva accept the reality of the universe, though it is dependent for its very existence (*sattā*) on Brahman which is the source of the universe as declared in the Upaniṣad. On the contrary, Śaṁkara maintains the view that Brahman alone is real and that the universe is illusory in character. In other words, Brahman itself appears illusorily as the universe due to *avidyā* in the same way as the rope is cognized as a snake due to ignorance. He seeks to defend this theory on the basis of the doctrine of *avidyā*, the cosmic principle of illusion. He also advances several other arguments besides scriptural authority in defense of this theory. We need not go into these details, which are well known to the students of Vedānta. We are concerned here to find out whether the Upaniṣads support it and if so, whether Bādarāyaṇa's *sūtras* differ from it.

Though the Upaniṣads in general do not expressly state that the universe is illusory in the sense understood by Śaṁkara, there are a few texts which are claimed by the Advaitins to imply the *mithyātva* of the universe. The following statement of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* is quoted by Śaṁkara to prove the illusory character of the universe: *yathā, saumya, ekena mṛt-piṇḍena sarvaṁ mṛṇmayam vijñātaṁ syāt, vācārabhanaṁ vikāro nāmadheyaṁ, mṛttikety-eva satyam.*[1]

It means, according to the interpretation of Śaṁkara: "Just as, my dear, by one clod of clay all that is made of clay becomes known, the modification being only a name arising from speech, while the truth is that it is just clay." Based on this text, Bādarāyaṇa has formulated, as admitted both by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, the *sūtra* which reads: *tadanayatvam ārambhaṇa śabdādibhyaḥ.*[2] It means, according to Śaṁkara, that the universe as an effect is non-different from Brahman as its cause in the sense that the former does not have an existence apart from the cause.

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[1] *Ch. Up.*, VI.1.4.

[2] *VS*, II.1.14 acc. *SB*; II.1.15 acc. *RB*.

We have discussed in chapter 5 the fuller implications of the Upaniṣadic statement and the *sūtra,* as interpreted by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja. As explained therein, if the illustrations cited by the Upaniṣad are understood properly, the text in question does not convey the idea that the cause alone is real and the effects as such are not real. In the same way, the term *ananyatva* or non-difference employed by Bādarāyaṇa to explain the causal relationship between Brahman as cause (*kāraṇa*) and the universe as its effect (*kārya*) does not imply that the latter is *mithyā.* With reference to the *satkāryavāda* accepted by the Vedāntin, as against the *asatkāryavāda* of Naiyāyikas, the term *ananyatva* implies that the universe is non-different from Brahman in the sense that the former is a different state of the latter just as pot is a modified form of the same substance, clay.

In view of these facts, there is no difference of opinion between the teachings of the Upaniṣads and the *sūtra* in this respect.

There are a few other Upaniṣadic statements which are claimed to support the theory of *mithyātva* of the universe. These texts generally affirm the absolute oneness of the Reality and deny the existence of everything else other than Brahman. Some of the texts categorically negate difference (*bheda*) and multiplicity (*nānātva*). All such statements are interpreted by Śaṁkara to convey the idea of illusory character of the manifold universe. We shall examine a few of these to find out their correct import.

The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* dealing with *sad-vidyā* states: *sadeva saumya, idam agra asīd, ekam-eva advitīyam.* It means: "In the beginning (prior to creation), this universe was Being alone, one only, without a second." The implication of this text, according to Śaṁkara, is that Brahman is the only Reality and other than that nothing else really exists. It means that even the universe which is other than Brahman is illusory in character. We have already discussed the proper implication of this text and shown that it does not support the theory of *mithyātva* of the universe.

The next important passage from the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* in which the two modes of Brahman are negated in respect of it by the words *neti neti* is claimed to support this theory. We have mentioned the full contents of this passage in the chapter on the theory of two Brahmans. It commences with the statement: *dve vāva brahmaṇo rūpe mūrtaṁ ca amūrtaṁ ca, martyaṁ ca amṛtaṁ ca, sthitaṁ ca sacca, yacca tyaccha.* It means that Brahman has two forms, a gross and subtle, the mortal and non-mortal, non-pervasive and pervasive, visible and non-visible. After narrating the details of these two forms, the passage states as a philosophic teaching (*ādeśa*): *athāta adeśo, neti neti; na hy-etasmād iti, nety-anyat-param asti; atha nāmadheyam satyasya satyaṁ, prāṇa vai satyaṁ, teṣām eṣa satyam.*[1] It means, according to Śaṁkara: "Now, therefore, there is the teaching. Not this, not this; there is nothing other than this and different from this (Brahman) described as 'not this'. Bādarāyaṇa has taken due note of this text as is evident from the *sūtra* which is formulated on the basis of the Upaniṣadic text, as accepted both by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja. The *sūtra* reads: *Prakṛtaitāvattvaṁ hi pratiṣedhati tato bravīti ca bhūyaḥ.*[2] Its general meaning is that the Upaniṣadic text (*net neti*) negates the two forms of Brahman described earlier and it is supported by what is said later about Brahman. The fuller implications of the Upaniṣadic statements and the *sūtra*, as explained by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja, have been discussed in chapter 5. It is observed therein that the negation, according to the wording of the *sūtra*, is not in respect of the two forms as described earlier but on the contrary, it applies to the limited aspects of Brahman as stated previously (*prakṛtaitāvattvaṁ*). That is, the phrase *neti neti* means that Brahman is not to be regarded as possessing only this much of qualifications described in terms of *mūrta* and *amūrta* forms. This is corroborated by the texts which follow after the word *neti neti.* These state that there is none greater than Brahman referred to earlier (*na hyetasmāditi, nety-anyad paramasti*). Besides, the text designates Brahman as *satyasya satyaṁ* which affirms its glory. This is the implication of the words of the *sūtra, tato bravīti ca bhūyaḥ.* If this is the correct import of the *sūtra,* as explained faithfully by Rāmānuja, it cannot be said that Brahman is devoid of all determination (*nirviśeṣa*). If the Upaniṣadic passage is understood with reference to the *sūtra,* which is a comment on it, there is no scope to draw the conclusion that the text *neti neti* negates the two forms of Brahman including the reality of the universe. The word *rūpa* is interpreted by Śaṁkara to mean that which is *arūpa* (indeterminate) is regarded as *rūpa* (form) by erroneous superimposition (*rūpyate yābhyām arūpaṁ paraṁbrahma avidyayā adhyāropābhyām*). The two forms which are superimposed on Brahman are negated by the *neti neti* Śruti. This explanation of Śaṁkara would be sustainable if the concerned *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* passage had indicated that the descriptive account of the two forms of Brahman were falsely superimposed on Brahman out of ignorance. But there is nothing in the passage to suggest this idea. In fact the universe constitutes the *śarīra* or the body of Brahman by virtue of its immanence in it, as declared by the *Antaryāmi Brāhmaṇa* of the same *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad.* Besides, the theory of *māyā* or *avidyā* as conceived by Śaṁkara is not mentioned explicitly either in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* or in any other Upaniṣad. Thus, there is full agreement between the teaching of the Upaniṣad and the views of Bādarāyaṇa in this regard.

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[1] *Bṛ. Up.*, II.3.6.

[2] *VS*, III.2.21.

Even according to Madhva the *neti neti* Śruti does not support the *mityhātva* of the universe. The terms *mūrta* and *amūrta* mean for Madhva embodied and disembodied forms of God. The words *neti neti* imply that God is neither embodied nor disembodied (*iti na iti na iti mūrtāmūrta vilakṣaṇa ityarthitaḥ*). The double negation is intended to show that God is unlike anything embodied or disembodied (*ubhaya sādṛśya niṣedhārtha dvivāram*). At the same time there is none higher than God (*iti neti niṣidhyamānamapi etasmāt anyat paraṁ nāsti*). Whatever may be the merit of Madhva's interpretation, the Mūtrāmūrta Brāhmaṇa does not prove the illusory character of the universe.

We come across other statements in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* which negate the multiplicity (*nānātva*) and difference (*bheda*). Thus it says: *naiha nānāsti kiñ-cana; mṛtyoḥ mṛtyum apnoti ya iha nāneva paśyati.* Another text in the same Upaniṣad states: *yatra hi dvaitam iva bhavati, tad itara itaraṁ paśyati; yatra tu asya sarvam ātmaivābhūt tat kena kaṁ paśyet.*[1] It means: "Where there is duality as it were, there one sees another; where, verily, everything has become Self, then by what and whom one should see." Both these texts on the face of it imply the unreality of the universe since other than Self (Brahman) nothing else exists. But according to Rāmānuja, such statements do not necessarily prove the *mithyātva* of the universe if these texts are interpreted with reference to the general background of the Philosophy of the Upaniṣad as enunciated in other major Upaniṣads, particulary *Chāndogya* and the *Taittirīya*. The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* states that Brahman wills to become many (*bahusyām prajāyeya*). If the universe is regarded as the modified state of Brahman as pointed out by the Sūtrakāra by using the term *pariṇāmāt,* it cannot be *mithyā,* unless it is established that the universe is an illusory appearance of Brahman on the basis of *vivartavāda*. But this is not the case either according to the *sūtras* or the Upaniṣads.

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[1] *Br. Up.*, II.4.11-14.

The *Chāndogya* teaches that all this (universe) is Brahman (*sarvaṁ khalu idaṁ brahma*). This equation of Brahman and the universe cannot be taken in the sense of identity since the two are different in their nature. On the basis of the principle of *bādhārtha sāmānādhikaraṇya*,[1] Śaṁkara interprets this text to imply that the universe is to be negated as an illusory appearance due to *avidyā* and that Brahman as the only Reality is to be affirmed. But this interpretation would not be sustainable since the doctrine of *avidyā* as conceived by Śaṁkara is not supported either by the Upaniṣad or Bādarāyaṇa. The only plausible explanation to justify the equation is to accept that Brahman as the cause of the universe is the Self of the entire universe, as stated in the *Antaryāmī Brāhmaṇa* and also *Chāndogya* (*aitadātmyam idam sarvam*). The *sūtra* which reads as *sarvatra prasiddhopadeśāt* which is based on the *Chāndogya Upaniṣadic* text also confirms this fact. It would then follow that the universe as an effect of Brahman is not *mithyā* but it is *ananya* or non-distinct from Brahman in the sense that it is another state of Brahman, as Bādarāyaṇa himself has stated.[2] In the light of these explanations the few statements which negate the plurality have to be understood. Accordingly, all such texts imply that other than Brahman as the indwelling Self of the universe there is no second Reality. Alternatively, as Madhva explains, there is only one independent Reality and that there is no other Reality which exists independent of Brahman. Thus, there is no disparity between the teachings of the Upaniṣads and those of Bādarāyaṇa on this point.

More than the scriptural texts, the illusoriness of the universe is established by the Advaitins on the basis of the doctrine of *māyā*. It is contended that Brahman appears illusorily as the universe due to *māyā*, the cosmic principle of illusion, which conceals the true nature of Brahman and projects the appearance of the universe just as the ignorance of the true nature of the rope causes the appearance of the snake. The nature of *māyā* is indescribable (*anirvacanīya*) in the sense that it is neither real nor unreal but different from both. We have observed in chapter 5 that Bādarāyaṇa does not refer to the doctrine of *māyā* as conceived by Śaṁkara. Only in one *sūtra* related to the nature of the objects seen in the state of dream, the term *māyā* is used but it does not bear the same meaning as understood by the Advaitins. Now we have to find out if the Upaniṣads refer to this doctrine and if so whether Bādarāyaṇa differs from them.

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[1] In a statement where two terms are found in apposition, what is implied by one term is negated in respect of the other.

[2] *VS*, II.1.15.

According to the Advaitins, the Upaniṣads support this doctrine. Some modern scholars are of the view that this doctrine does not constitute 'a feature of the primitive philosophy of the Upaniṣads.' A few others are, however, of the opinion that the germs of it are found in some of the passages of the older Upaniṣads such as *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*. Both according to Rāmānuja and Madhva, the doctrine of *māyā* as conceived by the Advaitins is not supported by the scriptural texts. However, the Advaitins quote a few Upaniṣadic texts in support of this theory. These need to be examined.

The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* states: *anṛtena hi pratyūḍhāḥ.*[1] It means that the persons who do not find Brahman are hidden by untruth (*anṛta*). The word *anṛta* is regarded by the Advaitin as *ajñāna* or ignorance as a positive entity (*bhāvarūpa*) since it stands as a veil to the true knowledge of Brahman. This meaning is derived on the basis of the earlier statement of the same passage which reads: *teṣām satyānām satām anṛtam apidhānam* ("Of them which are true, the true is the covering").[2]

This text, if properly interpreted, does not refer to *ajñāna* or *avidyā* as conceived by the Advaitin. In the statement "Hidden by the untrue," the word *anṛta* does not denote the inexplicable; it rather denotes, as Rāmānuja explains *karma* or such actions that cause contraction of knowledge (*jñāna-saṅkoca-bhūta karma*). That *karma* is opposed to knowledge is established by the Upaniṣadic texts.[3] This interpretation is in consonance with the earlier statement of the same passage, viz., "They do not find that Brahman, for they are carried away by *anṛta*." The term *anṛta* also means *pāpa* or sin inasmuch as it is an hindrance to the attainment of liberation.

Another text from the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* is also quoted by the Advaitin in support of this theory. It states: *na asad-asid-no-sadāsīt tadānīṁ; tamasā guḍham agre praketam.*[4] It means: "Then (prior to

[1] *Ch. Up.*, VIII.3.2.

[2] Ibid., VIII.3.1.

[3] See *Kaṭha Up.: Ṛtaṁ pibantau sukṛtasya loke. Ṛta* meaning fruits of good deeds is opposite of *anṛta*, the sinful deeds.

[4] *Tait. Brāh.*, II.8.9. See also *Ṛgveda*, X.129.73.

creation), there was neither non-being nor being; there was darkness, hidden by darkness (*tamas*)."

Even this text does not imply *ajñāna* as understood by the Advaitin. The word *tamas* here refers to the primordial cosmic matter (*mūla prakṛti*). This meaning is established by the very Upaniṣadic texts in which *tamas* stands for *prakṛti.*[1] In the present statement the description of *tamas* as neither *sat* nor *asat* means that the sentient and non-sentient entities which at the time of creation are called as *sat* and *tyat* as mentioned in the *Taittirīya,* are merged during the period of dissolution in the collective totality of non-sentient primordial cosmic matter which is denoted by the general term *tamas.* It does not, therefore, mean *avidyā* as neither real nor unreal but different from both.

The term *māyā* does not occur in any of the Upaniṣads except in one statement of the *Śvetāśvatara.* It reads: *māyāṁ tu prakṛtiṁ vidyāt, māyinaṁ tu maheśvaram.*[2] It means: "Know then that *prakṛti* is *māyā* and the wielder of *māyā* is the great Lord." Some Advaitins equate the term *prakṛti,* taken in the sense of material cause, with *māyā,* as the principle of illusion and claim that *māyā* is the material cause of the universe. Since *māyā* is illusory, the universe as its product is also illusory.

If we take into consideration the context in which this text appears, it does not follow that neither *māyā* referred to in it is illusory nor the universe as its product is illusory. In the statement in question illusoriness is not attributed to *prakṛti.* On the contray, *māyā* is first stated as the subject and then it is pointed out that it is *prakṛti* which is the predicate in the statement. In the preceding sentence the words *māyin* and *māyā* are used (*asmat māyī sṛjate viśvam-etat*) and it is not clear what these two terms stand for. In order to clarify it, the text says that *māyin* is the Lord and *māyā* is *prakṛti,* the primordial cosmic matter which evolves by the will of God into the material world. Thus, the term *māyā* appearing in this solitary Upaniṣadic statement cannot be taken to support the theory of Advaitin. Besides, as Rāmānuja points out, the term *māyā* does not necessarily mean the illusoriness. It is also widely current in the sense of what is real. It is applicable to knowledge and also to that which produces wonderful products (*vicitra sṛṣṭikaratva*).[1]

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[1] See *Bṛ. Up.,* III.7.3: *Yasya tamaḥ śarīraṁ.* Also *Subāla Up.,* 2: *Akṣaram tamasi līyate.*
[2] *Śv. Up.,* IV.10.

From the foregoing evaluation of the few Upaniṣadic texts, it is obvious that the doctrine of *māyā* or *avidyā* as understood by Śaṁkara is not advocated by the Upaniṣads. Nor is it reflected in the *Vedāntasūtra*. It is a theory which appears to have been introduced into Śaṁkara's Vedānta system as a postulate to explain the appearance of the Absolute undifferentiated 'One' Reality as 'many'. If the Upaniṣads uphold absolute idealistic Monism, as some scholars contend, then it would be an inevitable corollary to it, as is the case with the Mādhyamika Buddhism which also adopts the concept of *saṁvṛti* to account for the appearance of the 'many'. It is outside the scope of the book to discusss the merit of this theory. It would suffice for our purpose to note that this doctrine is neither well established in the Upaniṣads nor in the *Vedāntasūtra* and hence there is no disagreement between Bādarāyaṇa and the Upaniṣadic teaching with regard to this theory.

THE DOCTRINE OF SĀDHANA

The Upaniṣads have accorded equal importance to the *sādhana* or the ways and means of attaining Brahman, which is the Supreme Goal of human endeavour. The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* states in a significant way that the knower of Brahman attains the highest (*brahmavid āpnoti param*). The mere knowledge of Brahman is of little value if it does not lead to its actual realization. The Upaniṣads have, therefore, dealt with all aspects of the *sādhana*, viz., the acquisition of spiritual knowledge through the study of the Sacred texts (*śravaṇa*), repeated reflection of what has been learnt from the preceptor (*manana*), the practice of meditation (*nididhyāsana*), the cultivation of ethical virtues and the scrupulous observance of the prescribed rituals. Each of the major Upaniṣads has enjoined one or more methods of meditation which are designated as *vidyās*. There are thirty-two *vidyās* and these are regarded as alternative methods to be pursued for the attainment of the same one spiritual goal. In all these matters Bādarāyaṇa closely follows the teaching of the Upaniṣads and there is no disagreement between Bādarāyaṇa and the Upaniṣad.

There is, however, one important point relating to the nature of the *sādhana* on which there appears to be some disagreement, if we go by the divergent views expressed by the commentators. The issue involved is whether *upāsanā* which is enjoined by several Upaniṣads is the direct means to the Supreme Goal or it is *jñāna* understood as direct realization of the identity of *jīva* and Brahman (*ātmaikya-jñāna*) that serves as the direct *sādhana* for total liberation from bondage. We have discussed this matter in detail in chapter 7 and we have noted that according to Bādarāyaṇa, *vidyā* in the sense of *upāsanā* is the direct means to *puruṣārtha*.[1] Nevertheless the question is raised whether the term *vidyā* employed by Bādarāyaṇa refers to *upāsanā* and if so, whether it is in consonance with the Upaniṣadic teaching. This question is relevant because the Upaniṣads also refer to *jñāna*, *vedana* and *darśana*, all bearing the same meaning, as the means to *mokṣa*. Thus says the *Taittirīya: brahmavid āpnoti param* which means that the knower of Brahman attains the highest. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* states that *Ātman* is to be intuited (*ātmā vā are draṣṭavyaḥ*). The *Chāndogya* mentions: *anuvidya vijānāti*.[2] More important than these, the *Śvetāśvatara* emphasizes that knowledge of Brahman alone leads to liberation and that there is no other means than this.[3] If such statements are taken into consideration, there is, prima facie, some disagreement between the view of Bādarāyaṇa and that of the Upaniṣad on the assumption that *vidyā* for Bādarāyaṇa stands for *upāsanā*, as interpreted by Rāmānuja.

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[1] See *Śatadūṣaṇi, vāda* 54, *māyā vayunam jñānam iti naighaṇṭukāḥ*. See also *Ṛgveda*, VI.7.18: *Indro mayābhiḥ pururūpa iyate*.

We have discussed this issue in chapter 7. If we look at this matter objectively with reference to the general trend of the Upaniṣadic teachings and the explanation found in the very Upaniṣads, there is no conflict between the view of Bādarāyaṇa and that of the Upaniṣad on the subject, as explained by Rāmānuja. The apparent conflict is created by the commentators by the adoption of an interpretation of the relevent Upaniṣadic texts in accordance with their accepted doctrines. According to the Upaniṣads, the term *vedana* or *jñāna* and *upāsanā* or *nididhyāsana* are synonymous terms, as is evident from the two passages of *Chāndogya*, which are acknowledged both by Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja.[4] Despite this fact, if Śaṁkara interprets the term *vedana* or *jñāna* to mean *ātmaikya-jñāna*, it is because of his acceptance of *ajñāna* as the cause of bondage. *Ajñāna* can only be eradicated by direct knowledge (*aparokṣa jñāna*) and not by *upāsanā*, which for him involves a human endeavour as enjoined by the Upaniṣad. For Madhva, *aparokṣa jñāna* or direct vision of the image of God (*bimba-darśana*), which is conferred on those who have performed meditation (*nididhyāsana*) by the grace of God, is the direct means to *mokṣa* and hence he interprets *viydā* in this particular *sūtra* as *aparokṣa jñāna*. But the Upaniṣads do not seem to support these views explicitly. *Karma* in the form of *puṇya* and *pāpa* arising from the past deeds, according to the Upaniṣads, is the hindrance to *mokṣa*[1] and it can be eradicated only by *upāsanā* or continuous meditation on Brahman along with the fulfilment of all the prerequisites for it. Bādarāyaṇa seems to have taken due note of these facts enshrined in the Upaniṣads and accordingly he frames the *sūtras* by way of reconciling the apparently conflicting views expressed in the several Upaniṣads. Thus, there is no deviation from the Upaniṣads on the part of Bādarāyaṇa in respect of this theory on *sādhana*.

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[1] *VS*, III.4.1: *Puruṣārtho ataḥ śabdāt iti bādarāyaṇaḥ.*

[2] *Ch. Up.*, VIII.7.1.

[3] *Śv. Up.*, III.8: *Tam eva viditvā atimṛtyumeti, nānyaḥ panthā vidyate ayanāya.*

[4] See *supra*, p. 116, n. 4.

THE DOCTRINE OF PARAMA PURUṢĀRTHA

The last chapter of *Brahmasūtra* which is named as Phalādhyāya is devoted to the consideration of the *parama puruṣārtha* or the Supreme Goal. It deals with the nature of *mokṣa* or liberation from bondage, the *utkrānti* or exit of soul from body after liberation, the *arcirādi-mārga* or the path through which the soul marches into the abode of Brahman and the status of the soul in the state of *mokṣa*. On all these points, Bādarāyaṇa closely follows the Upaniṣadic teachings. However, only on one important point regarding the status of *jīva* in *mukti* there appears to be some divergence, if we are guided by the view advanced by Śaṁkara. The issue involved is whether *jīva* after it is liberated from bondage and attains Brahman, becomes identical with Brahman or whether it retains its individuality and enjoys the bliss of Brahman. The first alternative is adopted by Śaṁkara, whereas Rāmānuja and Madhva adopt the second. As we have observed in chapter 8, Bādarāyaṇa seems to be in favour of the latter. We are, therefore, required to find out if the Upaniṣads support Śaṁkara's theory and if so, whether there is any disagreement between Bādarāyaṇa and the Upaniṣad in this regard.

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[1] See *Ch. Up.*, VIII.3.2: *Anṛtena hi pratyūḍhāḥ*. See also *Muṇḍ. Up.*: *Vidvān puṇya pāpe vidhūya nirañjanaḥ paramaṁ sāmyam upaiti.*

The *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* states: *sa yo ha vai tat paramaṁ brahma veda brahmaiva bhavati.*[1] It means: "He, verily, who knows the Supreme Brahman becomes Brahman itself." The preceding text cites the illustration of the flowing rivers which disappear in the ocean casting off the name and shape. Likewise, the knower of Brahman attains the Divine person (*paramaṁ puruṣam upaiti divyam*). If this text, on the analogy of the flowing rivers which merge into the ocean, is understood in the literal sense without taking into consideration other Upaniṣadic texts on this subject, the contention of Śaṁkara would be tenable. But it is not so. The same *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* states in the earlier section that the knower of the Lord (Brahman), shaking off good and evil and free from blemish, attains the supreme equality with the Lord (*paramaṁ sāmyam upaiti*). Besides, the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* which refers to the attainment of Brahman as the Supreme Goal of the *brahmavit,* describes the fruit achieved in terms of enjoyment of the glory of Brahman (*so aśnute sarvān kāmān saha*).[2] On the basis of these texts, the words *brahmaiva bhavati* in the *Muṇḍaka* statement cannot be taken as identity of the individual self with Brahman in the state of *mukti* but on the contrary, it means equality with Brahman (*sāmya*) in consonance with the other Upaniṣadic texts dealing with the nature of *mokṣa.* The *Bhagavadgītā* uses the word *sādharmya* in the same sense to describe the nature of *mokṣa.*

In interpreting the *sūtra* which uses the term *avibhāga* or non-difference to describe the status of *jīva* in *mukti.* Śaṁkara interprets it as identity on the ground that Upaniṣadic text such as *tattvamasi, ahaṁ brahmāsmi,* teach the identity of *jīva* and Brahman. But we have observed earlier that the Upaniṣads draw a clear distinction between *jīva* and Brahman by virtue of the different characteristics the two possess and that the purport of these *abheda* Śrutis is in favour of non-difference in the sense. That the substance as inseparably related to the attribute is one.

Logically, two ontological entities of different nature cannot become identical. Keeping in mind this purport of the Upaniṣadic texts dealing with the nature of *mokṣa,* Bādarāyaṇa has formulated the *sūtras.* If the *sūtras* and the concerned Upaniṣadic statements are understood properly without imposing on them the doctrines of the commentators, there is no disparity between the teachings of the *sūtras* and those of the Upaniṣad on this subject. In the absence of any positive statements on the theory of two Brahmans as conceived by Śaṁkara, there is no justification to interpret the *sūtras* and the concerned Upaniṣadic texts that do not conform to the doctrine of Śaṁkara on *mokṣa* in favour of *Saguṇa* Brahman. Bādarāyaṇa right from the beginning to the end of the *Vedāntasūtra* speaks of only one Brahman which is *saviśeṣa* in character. The enquiry into the nature of the Brahman which is enjoined at the commencement of the *Brahmasūtra* and the description of the Supreme Goal to be attained by the seeker of *mokṣa* in terms of *anāvṛtti* or non-return to the mundane existence, are all in respect of *saviśeṣa* Brahman.

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[1] *Muṇḍ. Up.,* III.2.9.

[2] *Tait. Up.,* I.1.2.

The philosophical portion of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* which commences with the teaching of *sat* or Brahman as the source of the cosmos, also concludes with the teaching of the attainment of Brahman from whence there is no return to the mundane existence.[1] Thus, the *sūtras* of Bādarāyaṇa closely follow the same central theme of the Upaniṣad.

From the foregoing objective evaluation of the selected Upaniṣadic texts bearing on the five important doctrines of Vedānta—Brahman, *jīva, jagat, sādhana,* and *mokṣa*—it may be observed that Bādarāyaṇa does not deviate from the teachings of the Upaniṣads. The Vedānta that is enshrined in the *Brahmasūtra* is not in anyway different from the Vedānta enunciated in the Upaniṣad. The *Brahmasūtra* of Bādarāyaṇa is an authoritative treatise for the Vedānta system as much as the Upaniṣad is. The true Vedānta system should, therefore, conform to both the Upaniṣad and the *Vedāntasūtra.* What the nature of that system is and which of the three schools reflects it adequately would be considered in the subsequent chapter.

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[1] The 5th *sūtra* of the first *adhyāya 'Īkṣateḥ nā-śabdam'* from which Vedānta teachings commence is based on *Chāndogya Upaniṣadic* text, *Sadeva saumya idam agra āsīt...* (VI.2.1). The concluding *sūtra, anāvṛtti śabdāt* refers to the concluding passage of *Chāndogya* reading as *na ca punarāvartate* (VIII.15.1).

Chapter 10

General Evaluation and Conclusion

In the chapters 1-8, we have discussed in detail the views of Bādarāyaṇa on the major doctrines of Vedānta under the following headings: (1) Brahman—its nature and distinguishing characteristics; (2) the universe—its ontological status and relation to Brahman; (3) the *jīva*—its nature and relation to Brahman; (4) the *sādhana* or means to attain Brahman; and (5) the Supreme Goal. We have also examined the selected statements of the Upaniṣads dealing with these five doctrines and observed that the *Vedāntasūtra* as the earliest extant manual on the Vedānta system fully conforms to the teachings of the Upaniṣads. In the present chapter, we shall attempt to evaluate the extent to which the three principal schools of Vedānta—Advaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita and Dvaita—conform to the teachings of Bādarāyaṇa on Vedānta as enunciated in the *sūtras* and also determine the nature of the system developed by him.

In this connection, the first question that needs to be considered is whether all the three schools represent faithfully the philosophy outlined in the *sūtras*. Prima facie, the answer is in the affirmative if we go by the claims made by the respective exponents of these schools. But if we examine the *sūtras* objectively, these claims do not appear to be sustainable in all respects. As we have already noticed in our study of the selected *sūtras* on the basis of the dispassionate evaluation of the comments of Śaṁkara, Rāmānuja and Madhva, there are wide variations among them not only with regard to the interpretation of some of the crucial *sūtras* but also in the presentation of the major doctrines which are not reflected in the *sūtras*. This prevents us from coming to the positive conclusion that all the schools of Vedānta do represent faithfully Bādarāyaṇa. But at the same time it is unfair to assert, as some scholars have done, that a particular school of Vedānta alone is faithful to the *sūtras*. As will be seen presently, all the schools of Vedānta do generally represent Bādarāyaṇa's Vedānta since they are developed on the basis of the *Vedāntasūtras* and also the Upaniṣads. There is full agreement with Bādarāyaṇa in respect of the broad subjects of Vedānta. There is disagreement only in respect of the details of the doctrines.

The points of agreement may be first noted. The *Vedāntasūtra* primarily deals with the three broad subjects, viz., *tattva* or the Ultimate Reality, *hita* or the means of its attainment and *puruṣārtha* or the Supreme Goal of human endeavour. The four *adhyāyas* of *Brahmasūtra* is accordingly structured. The first two chapters deal with *tattva*, the third with *hita* and the fourth with *puruṣārtha*. *Tattva* also includes *jīvātman* or the individual self and *jagat* or the universe. In terms of the doctrines, the *Vedāntasūtra* covers the following five: (1) The doctrine of Brahman, the ultimate metaphysical Reality, which constitutes the central theme of *Brahmasūtra*, (2) the doctrine of the universe, its nature and relation to Brahman, (3) the doctrine of *jīva*, its nature and relation to Brahman, (4) the doctrine of *sādhana*, and (5) the doctrine of *parama puruṣārtha*. All the schools of Vedānta deal with them. In view of these facts, all of them represent Bādarāyaṇa's system of Vedānta. They also refer to the Upaniṣads and other scriptural texts in support of their theories, as Bādarāyaṇa himself has done in formulating the *sūtras*.

When we come to the details of the doctrines, we cannot fail to notice the strong differences of opinion among the exponents of the Vedānta in respect of major points. Some of these theories have assumed such a controversial character that it has given room for major disputes among the Vedāntins. This makes it difficult to conclude that all the schools of Vedānta faithfully represent Bādarāyaṇa.

Without going into the details of the doctrines, which are adequately covered in the earlier chapters, we shall briefly outline the essential points of difference that exist between the three Vedānta schools and Bādarāyaṇa.

Coming to the nature of Brahman which constitutes the central doctrine of Vedānta, Bādarāyaṇa is of the view that it is *saviśeṣa* or the Supreme Being as qualified with attributes and not *nirviśeṣa* or the transcendental Being devoid of all characteristics. As we have seen in the first three chapters, the *sūtras* do not refer to *nirviśeṣa* Brahman. The Upaniṣads also do not explicitly mention it. The terms such as *nirguṇa*, *niṣkala* and *niṣkriya* used in a few Upaniṣadic statements do not imply that Brahman is absolutely devoid of all determinations. The definition of Brahman by Bādarāyaṇa on the basis of the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* as the cause of the threefold cosmic process and the description of Brahman by several *sūtras* in terms of its distinguishing characteristics clearly support the conception of Brahman as *saviśeṣa*. The theory of two forms of Brahman, *apara* or lower Brahman and *para* or higher Brahman, a distinction which is sought to be justified by Śaṁkara on the basis of the doctrine of *avidyā*, does not also find any support in the *sūtras*. Śaṁkara's theory of *nirviśeṣa* Brahman does not, therefore, conform to the view of Bādarāyaṇa, whereas that of Rāmānuja and Madhva represent it.

Regarding another important theory relating to Brahman, Bādarāyaṇa is of the view that Brahman is the material cause (*upādāna kāraṇa*) of the universe as expressly stated in the *sūtra* which is based on the teaching of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. Both Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja uphold it, though they offer different explanation as to how Brahman evolves itself (*pariṇāma*) into the universe without affecting its *svarūpa*. Madhva, who does not accept the *upādāna kāraṇatva* for Brahman definitely deviates from Bādarāyaṇa.

The description of Brahman as *ubhayaliṅga* or as having the twofold characteristic constitutes an important theory of the *Vedānta-sūtra*. This is also supported by the Upaniṣads. Both Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja have acknowledged it, though they have advanced divergent explanations on the fuller implication of the term *ubhayaliṅga* mentioned in the *sūtra*. To this extent they do not differ from Bādarāyaṇa. But Madhva overlooks this teaching of Bādarāyaṇa by interpreting the term to mean as *bhinna svarūpa* or difference in respect of the nature of Brahman.

There are a few other *sūtras* relating to Brahman on which the three commentators offer varying interpretation. But these are of minor character and do not constitute a major deviation from the teachings of Bādarāyaṇa on Brahman.

Coming to the doctrine of *jīva*, Bādarāyaṇa enunciates in clear terms on the authority of the Upaniṣad that it is eternal (*nitya*), the knowing subject (*jñātā*), the agent of action (*kartā*), atomic in size (*aṇu*) and as *aṁśa* or part of Brahman. Though there is general agreement among the three schools on the essential points regarding the nature of *jīva*, Śaṁkara differs from Bādarāyaṇa by rejecting the view that *jīva* is the knowing subject (*jñātā*) and the agent of action (*kartā*) in the real sense of the term and that it is also *aṇu*. Rāmānuja and Madhva accept the views of Bādarāyaṇa in this regard, except for some minor difference in the matter of interpretation of the concerned *sūtras* by them.

The major issue relating to the theory of *jīva* is whether it is a real ontological entity different from Brahman. As we have pointed out in the chapter on *jīva*, Bādarāyaṇa is of the view that *jīva* is distinct from Brahman and the former exists eternally as a separate entity even in the state of *mukti* without losing its individuality. Yet Śaṁkara advances the theory in his *Sūtrabhāṣya* that *jīva* in reality is identical with Brahman and it only appears as distinct from it due to the limiting adjuncts caused by *avidyā*. Śaṁkara, therefore, differs from Bādarāyaṇa, whereas Rāmānuja and Madhva agree with him in this regard.

The nature of the relation of *jīva* to Brahman is an equally important subject in Vedānta. The issue involved here is whether the relationship between the two is one of absolute difference (*bheda*), or non-difference (*abheda*), or difference-cum-non-difference (*bhedābheda*). Even at the time of Bādarāyaṇa, divergent views were held on this question by the ancient Vedānta teachers such as Āśmarathya, Auḍulomi and Kāśakṛtsna, as is evident from the references made to them by name in the *sūtras* under the Vākyānvayādhikaraṇa.[1] Āśmarathya subscribes to the theory of non-difference, according to Śaṁkara, whereas Auḍulomi holds the view of *bhedābheda*. Bādarāyaṇa rejects both these views. He accepts the theory of Kāśakṛtsna, according to which Brahman abides in the *jīva* (*avasthiteḥ iti kāśakṛtsnaḥ*).[2] If the term *avasthiti* mentioned in the *sūtra* is understood in the commonly accepted sense of one thing dwelling in another, it is evident that Brahman abides permanently in *jīva* as its Inner Controller (*antaryāmin*) as stated in the *Antaryāmī Brāhmaṇa*. This would imply that according to Bādarāyaṇa, Brahman as immanent in *jīva* is inherently related to *jīva* and the two are not identical. Śaṁkara would, therefore, differ from Bādarāyaṇa in so far as he upholds the identity between the two on the basis of this *sūtra*. Madhva also differs from Bādarāyaṇa since he does not admit that Vākyānvayādhikaraṇa deals with the question of relation of *jīva* to Brahman and interprets the term *avasthiti* in the sense that *karma* or performance of rituals has a bearing on Brahman (*sarvaṁ karmādikaṁ tasmin paramātmani sthitam*). Rāmānuja's explanation fully conforms to the *sūtra*.

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[1] See *supra*, ch. 6, pp. 106-9.

[2] *VS*, I.4.22.

The relation of *jīva* to Brahman is directly discussed by Bādarāyaṇa in the Aṁśādhikaraṇa. The *sūtra* explicitly states that *jīva* is *aṁśa* of Brahman.[1] As explained in the chapter on *jīva*, the implication of the term *aṁśa* is that *jīva* is an integral part of Brahman in the same way as an essential attribute is inherently related to its substance. Such a relation accommodates both difference and non-difference, difference on account of substance and attribute being different by their nature and non-difference in the sense that the substance as integrally related to the attribute is one. The two terms used in the *sūtra* namely, *nānā vyapadeśāt* and *anyathā ca* support this view. But Śaṁkara takes the word *aṁśa* as *aṁśa iva*, which means that *jīva* appears as part of Brahman and in reality it is not so. Madhva interprets this term in the sense of *tat-sadṛśa* or similar to Brahman in respect of attributes such as *jñāna* and *ānanda*. As both these views do not accept *bheda* and *abheda* in their primary sense, they differ from Bādarāyaṇa. Rāmānuja's explanation of the relationship between *jīva* and Brahman on the basis of the concept of *aṁśa-aṁśi* conforms to the *sūtra*.

The question relating to the ontological status of the universe is of greater importance. According to Bādarāyaṇa, the universe as an effect of Brahman is not illusory but real. There is causal relationship between the two. Nowhere in *Brahmasūtra* there is an indication that the universe is illusory in character (*mithyā*). Nor does the Upaniṣad mention it explicitly. Both Rāmānuja and Madhva accept this fact. But Śaṁkara, however, disagrees with Bādarāyaṇa and points out that the universe is an illusory appearance of Brahman caused by *māyā*, the cosmic principle of illusion. He seeks to justify this theory on the basis of the Upaniṣadic texts which speak of the absolute oneness of the Reality (*ekameva*) and the negation of the plurality (*nānātva niṣedha*). We have discussed in the preceding chapter the true implication of these Upaniṣadic texts and noted that they do not prove the illusory character of the universe. Śaṁkara's theory relating to the nature of the universe does not, therefore, find any support in the *sūtras* and as such it constitutes a major deviation from the Vedānta philosophy enunciated by Bādarāyaṇa.

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[1] *VS*, II.3.43: *Aṁśo nānāvyapadeśāt anyathā ca....*

The theory of causal relationship between Brahman and the universe is advanced in the Ārambhaṇādhikaraṇa, according to which the two are *ananya* or non-different as cause and effect. Both Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja accept Bādarāyaṇa's theory of *ananyatva*, though they have different views regarding its implication. For Śaṁkara *ananyatva* means that apart from the cause, the effect as such does not really exist. The effect may be regarded as real from an empirical point of view but in reality it is not so. For Rāmānuja cause and effect are *ananya* or non-distinct in the sense that the effect is the modified form of the cause, like the pot made out of clay. The effect is not, therefore, unreal. If Bādarāyaṇa had accepted the theory of *mithyātva* or illusory character of all effects, Śaṁkara's explanation would be sustainable. But it is not so. Hence Śaṁkara differs from Bādarāyaṇa on this point, whereas Rāmānuja's theory fully conforms to that of Bādarāyaṇa. Madhva also radically differs from Bādarāyaṇa by offering a novel interpretation of the term *ananyatva* in the sense that Brahman is the independent cause (*svatantrakāraṇa*) and also by overlooking the *Chāndogya Upaniṣadic* text on the basis of which the *sūtra* is formulated.

The nature of the relationship between Brahman and the universe in terms of difference, non-difference and difference-cum-non-difference is also discussed by Bādarāyaṇa. The Ahikuṇḍalādhikaraṇa, according to Rāmānuja, deals with this subject. According to Śaṁkara, it discusses the nature of the relation of *jīva* to Brahman. The analogies of the serpent and its coil and the luminous body and its light offered by Bādarāyaṇa are intended to explain the nature of the relation. The final view taken in this regard by Bādarāyaṇa is that it is either one of non-difference (according to Śaṁkara) or it is similar to that of *viśeṣaṇa* (attribute) to *viśeṣya* (substrate), according to Rāmānuja. In either interpretation, there is some kind of relationship between Brahman and the *jīva* (according to Śaṁkara) and between Brahman and the universe (according to Rāmānuja). Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja agree to some extent with Bādarāyaṇa on this point whereas Madhva, who offers an altogether different interpretation on these *sūtras* in favour of his doctrine of non-difference between *guṇa* and *guṇi*, overlooks the intended purport of these *sūtras*.

Regarding the doctrine of *sādhana* or the means of attainment of Brahman, the *sūtras* in the third and fourth *pāda* of third *adhyāya* and also the first *pāda* of fourth *adhyāya* reveal that Bādarāyaṇa is of the view that *upāsanā* or the unceasing meditation on Brahman aided by *karma* or observance of the prescribed rituals and cultivation of certain ethical virtues, serves as the direct means to the attainment of Brahman.[1] The Upaniṣads also enjoin *upāsanā* which is also called as *nididhyāsana, dhyāna* and *darśana,* as means to attain the Supreme Goal. A few Upaniṣadic texts no doubt refer to *vedana, jñāna,* etc., as means but these terms bear the same meaning as *upāsanā.* There is no specific mention in the *sūtras* that *ātmaikya-jñāna* or knowledge in the form of direct realization of the identity of the individual self and Brahman is the direct means, as Śaṁkara understands. Nor is there any mention of *aparokṣa jñāna* or the vision of Brahman as conceived by Madhva as the direct means to *mokṣa.* Hence, Śaṁkara and Madhva differ from the teaching of Bādarāyaṇa on this subject, whereas Rāmānuja fully conforms to it.

Now we are left with the doctrine of *parama-puruṣārtha* or the Supreme Goal. We have considered this matter at length in chapter 8. As observed therein, the relevant *sūtra* which is based on the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* specifically states that it consists of manifestation of the individual self in its true form (*sva-svarūpāvirbhāva*) after it is liberated from bondage and attains Brahman. Both Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja accept Bādarāyaṇa's view on this subject, except for a minor difference regarding the issue whether or not the self manifests itself in its true form along with the eight attributes ascribed to it as part of its essential nature. Madhva differs from Bādarāyaṇa by maintaining the view that the *jīvātman* after liberation enjoys *bhoga* or bliss in close proximity to Brahman by interpolating the word *avihāya* in place of *āvirbhāva* in the *sūtra.*

Regarding the status of *jīva* in *mukti,* the question arises whether *jīva* becomes one with Brahman or it retains its individuality and enjoys the bliss of Brahman. As explained in chapter 8, if the *sūtra* on this subject[2] is correctly interpreted, taking into consideration the later *sūtras* which refer to the difference between *jīva* and Brahman, it is clear that Bādarāyaṇa is not in favour of identity of *jīva* and Brahman in the state of *mokṣa.* Śaṁkara, therefore, differs from Bādarāyaṇa, while Rāmānuja and Madhva agree with him except for some difference in the interpretation of the concerned *sūtras* by them.

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[1] See ch. 7.

[2] *VS,* IV.4.3: *Avibhāgena dṛṣṭatvāt.*

The thoery of *krama-mukti* or *mokṣa* in two stages as conceived by Śaṁkara on the basis of two *vidyās—parā* and *aparā*—is not in consonance with the teaching of Bādarāyaṇa on this subject. The Upaniṣads clearly state that once the soul is liberated from bondage and attains Brahman through the *arcirādi mārga* as described in several Upaniṣads, there is no return to the mundane existence. The rejection of *utkrānti* or exit of soul from the body and its onward march to the spiritual realm known as *Brahma-loka* to enjoy the bliss of Brahman through the divine path (*arcirādi mārga*) in respect of those who attain the *ātmaikya-jñāna* or realization of *jīva* as Brahman is not in consonance with the Upaniṣads and the *sūtras*. Rāmānuja and Madhva generally agree with the views of Bādarāyaṇa on the subject.

From the foregoing account it may be noted that all the three schools of Vedānta have attempted to expound the Vedānta system as adumbrated by Bādarāyaṇa in the *Vedāntasūtra* and also as taught in the Upaniṣads. In this respect the systems developed by them represent Vedānta in the broad sense in spite of wide variations with regard to the details of the doctrines. If we go by the nature of the doctrines advanced by them to defend the type of the system under different titles such as Advaita or Absolute Non-dualism, Viśiṣṭādvaita or Non-dualism of the *viśiṣṭa* Reality and Dvaita or Dualism, we are confronted with the question whether all the three schools of Vedānta represent fully Bādarāyaṇa's system. It does not appear to be so, as there are differences in them of far reaching philosophical implications. Bādarāyaṇa too would not have advocated all the three streams of thought. It has to be one of the three or none at all. Some scholars have taken the view that Bādarāyaṇa differs from all the three schools. Some claim that Śaṁkara's system has greater affinity to the Upaniṣads than to Bādarāyaṇa's *sūtras*, while some other scholars are of the opinion that Rāmānuja is faithful to the *sūtras* more than to the Upaniṣads. A few scholars have also taken the view that Madhva's philosophy is far from Bādarāyaṇa's tachings. All these conclusions, in our opinion are biased and do not represent the correct position. As we have stated earlier, all the three *ācāryas*—Śaṁkara, Rāmānuja and Madhva—are eminent exponents of Vedānta gifted with deep spiritual insight and profound Śāstraic scholarship. Each one has attempted to present a philosophical system of high order on the basis of the Vedas and the Upaniṣads, which were then considered to be the sole authority for spiritual matters, supported with *tarka* or logical reasoning. While developing a system on the basis of the same sourcebooks—Upaniṣads, *Brahmasūtra* and *Bhagavadgītā*—they were guided by either some tradition or the influence of their spiritual predecessors and also the prevailing religious atmosphere as well as the social conditions of the time.

Śaṁkara was born in AD 788. At that time Buddhism had reached its climax with Mādhyamika's advocacy of *śūnyavāda* or nihilism, with the denial of the Upaniṣadic concept of Brahman or *Ātman* as the ground of the universe. Gauḍapāda, the earliest extant Advaita exponent appears to have been influenced by Mādhyamika Buddhism and he through his disciple would have influenced Śaṁkara. This was presumably the main reason for the advocacy of an absolute, idealistic Monism, germs of which are claimed to be present in some of the older Upaniṣads, such as *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*. Accordingly, Śaṁkara in re-establishing the Vedānta tradition, which existed right from the Vedic time, restored the Brahmavāda of the Upaniṣad or Brahman as the Ultimate Reality. But due to the influence of Gauḍapāda's idealistic Monism, he advocated the absolute oneness of the Ultimate Reality to the extreme extent of negating the plurality by the denial of the reality of the universe and the individual souls on the basis of the doctrine of *māyā*, the cosmic principle of illusion. The theory of *māyā* is an inevitable corollary of the Absolute Monism and it is to be postulated in order to explain how the 'one' becomes 'many'. The Mādhyamika Buddhists also have adopted the same principle of explanation in the name of *saṃvṛti*. Though the doctrine of *māyā* as conceived by Śaṁkara and his followers was foreign to the Upaniṣads, it had to be established as a doctrine of Vedānta in order to prove that the Advaita Vedānta system represents the *Aupaniṣada mata* or Philosophy of the Upaniṣads.

Rāmānuja was born two centuries later than Śaṁkara in AD 1017. During this period, due to the influence of the teachings of the Āḷvārs, the Vaiṣṇava saints of the south India and the impact of the Vaiṣṇavism, a monotheistic Vedic Relgion, the Bhakti movement had captured the minds of the people. The rigorous idealistic Monism of Śaṁkara with the denial of the reality to the individual souls and the universe and also the lower status accorded to God of Religion as *apara* Brahman, was hostile to the concept of *bhakti* as a personal loving relation to God. Against such a background

Rāmānuja developed Vedānta by following the old tradition. He himself states at the very outset of his *Śrībhāṣya* that he is closely following the teachings of the ancient sage, Bodhāyana and his illustrious successors (*pūrvācāryas*). Naturally, he took it as his life mission to re-establish Vedānta philosophy as contained in the Upaniṣads, the *Vedāntasūtras* and the *Bhagavadgītā*. This necessitated the reinterpretation of some of the crucial *sūtras* in the right manner to fit with the theistic Monism which is the dominant theme of not only the Upaniṣads but also the *Brahmasūtras*, Pāñcarātra Āgamas, Itihāsas and Purāṇas. It, therefore, became necessary to refute at great length the *māyāvāda*, in order to establish the concept of Brahman as the Supreme God of Religion (*Sarveśvara*), the reality of the souls and the universe, the *bhakti-yoga* as the means of attainment of Brahman and *mokṣa* or final liberation from bondage as a state of enjoyment of the bliss of Brahman in a supramundane realm named as Brahma-loka by the Upaniṣad and Paramapada by *Ṛgveda*.

Madhva was born only a century after Rāmānuja in AD 1238. During this short interval though theistic philosophy had gained some ground through the efforts of the successors of Rāmānuja, *māyāvāda* continued to have its influence on the people. As Bhakti movement had greater appeal to the masses than the rigorous Śaṁkara's philosophy, Madhva undertook it as his life mission to boost it. He, therefore, attempted to interpret the *Vedāntasūtras*, the Upaniṣads and the *Bhagavadgītā* by orienting the Vedānta philosophy towards monotheism with an added emphasis on Viṣṇu as the Supreme Reality and *bhakti* as the means of salvation. He seems to have developed an antagonism towards Śaṁkara's Advaita to such an extent that he attempts to interpret most of the *sūtras* as radically different from that of Śaṁkara. He even avoids the Upaniṣadic statements quoted by Śaṁkara as *viṣayavākya* and mentions in place of them, texts drawn from the *Ṛgveda*, the later Purāṇas such as *Skanda* and quite often several other scriptural texts in support of his novel interpretation of the *sūtras* from non-extant Vedic *śākhās* which were not known even to Śaṁkara, Bhāskara and Rāmānuja.

If we take these historical facts into consideration, we have to admit that all the three schools of Vedānta in the form in which they are available to us today, have undergone considerable development and have even outgrown the system as presented by

Bādarāyaṇa in his *sūtras* with doctrines of their own that cannot be traced in the *sūtras*. The *māyāvāda* of Advaita is a classic example of it. It, therefore, becomes difficult to answer the question whether the three schools—Advaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita and Dvaita—in their present developed form conform fully to Bādarāyaṇa's system.

Prima facie, none of the three schools appears to represent Bādarāyaṇa's system. The names adopted as the titles of these schools do not seem to be current in Bādarāyaṇa's time. In fact, Śaṁkara, Rāmānuja and Madhva also have not used them in their *Bhāṣyas*. It is only at a later time that the followers of the respective schools adopted these names for their systems to distinguish one school from the other. These titles are also misleading. The title 'Advaita' used for Śaṁkara's system may be justified in so far it emphasizes that Brahman is the only Ultimate Reality. The title 'Viśiṣṭādvaita' for Rāmānuja's system can also be justified since it accepts that Brahman as organically related to *cit* and *acit* (*cid-acid-viśiṣṭa-brahma*) is the one Ultimate Reality. But the title of 'Dvaita' adopted by the followers of Madhva for their system is hardly justified. Dvaita means dualism and Madhva's Vedānta cannot be dualism since it also upholds that Brahman is the only independent Reality. All the three schools are monistic in so far as they all accept Brahman as the Ultimate Reality. But the followers of Madhva do not like to regard their system as Monism and they prefer the title Dvaita or Dualism in order to distinguish it from Advaita of Śaṁkara and also emphasize the fivefold difference (*pañca-bheda*) advocated by Madhva, viz., difference between *Īśvara* and *jīva*, *Īśvara* and inanimate cosmic matter, difference between *jīva* and matter, difference between one *jīva* and another and lastly difference between one physical object and another. If Dvaita is taken as absolute Dualism without the acceptance of the oneness or organic unity of the three ontological entities—*Īśvara*, *jīva* and *jagat*—it would not conform to the system of Bādarāyaṇa which admits both difference and non-difference between Brahman and *jīva* and also between Brahman and *jagat*. In the same way the Advaita of Śaṁkara understood as absolute non-Dualism, that is, the absolute oneness of the Ultimate Reality with the denial of the reality of the manifold universe and the individual souls, cannot represent Bādarāyaṇa's system, since Bādarāyaṇa admits the reality of the universe and the souls, both of which are related to Brahman. The Viśiṣṭādvaita understood as oneness of the *viśista* Brahman as organically related to the *cit* (*jīvas*) and *acit* (universe) can be claimed to represent the system of Vedānta developed by Bādarāyaṇa, as will be seen presently.

The conformity of the three schools of Vedānta to the system of Bādarāyaṇa can be determined in a better way from a philosophical standpoint rather than from the point of view of their present titles. The major problem in Vedānta is concerned with the relationship between Brahman on the one hand and *jīva* and *jagat* on the other. The Upaniṣads refer to all the three ontological entities and so also the *Vedāntasūtra*. All the exponents of Vedānta acknowledge the three entities, though they may have difference of opinion regarding their relative ontological status. If all the three entities are accepted, the question that requires to be settled is how Brahman is related to the *jīva* and the universe. This important doctrine has engaged the attention of all the philosophers right from the Vedic time. The fundamental problem of all schools of philosophy is how the 'one' becomes the 'many'. In the area of Vedānta, Śaṁkara as an adherent of absolute Monism introduces the theory of *māyā*, the cosmic principle of illusion to explain how the one Ultimate Reality appears as the manifold universe. But as this theory is not found to be satisfactory, other ways of explanation have been adopted by the theistic schools of Vedānta. This is not the place to discuss the relative merits of these theories. We are only concerned for the present to find out the relationship between the 'one' and the 'many' as offered by Bādarāyaṇa on the basis of which his system of Vedānta can be appropriately categorized and then assess which school represents it.

As we have mentioned earlier, there are three ways in which the relationship between the three ontological entities are conceived by the Vedāntins right from the Upaniṣadic time. These are: it is one of difference (*bheda*) or it is one of non-difference (*abheda*) or it is one of difference-cum-non-difference (*bhedābheda*). Epistemologically, these are the three possible alternatives. Acknowledging this fact, Rāmānuja makes the following statement in the *Śrībhāṣya: nirviśeṣavastu-aikyavādinaḥ, bhedābheda vādinaḥ, kevalabheda-vādinaḥ....* *Nirviśeṣavastu-aikyavāda* applies to Śaṁkara. *Bhedābheda-vāda* applies to Bhāskara and Yādavaprakāśa among the older schools and to Nimbārka among the later schools of Vedānta. *Kevalabheda-vāda* refers to the Naiyāyikas and among the Vedāntins to the Madhva's system. In the light of these observations we have to determine the nature of system of Vedānta that Bādarāyaṇa advocates and then find out which particular school of Vedānta represents it. Does Bādarāyaṇa uphold *bhedavāda* or *abhedavāda* or *bhedābhedavāda*?

Bādarāyaṇa mentions the nature of relationship between the three ontological entities in four different *adhikaraṇas*—Vākyānvayādhikaraṇa, Aṁśādhikaraṇa, Ārambhaṇādhikaraṇa and Ahikuṇḍalādhikaraṇa—both according to Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja. For Madhva this subject is covered only in the Aṁśādhikaraṇa, and Pṛthagadhikaraṇa. The views expressed in the relevant *sūtras*, if the same are interpreted correctly, would reveal beyond any doubt the doctrine upheld by Bādarāyaṇa. As pointed out earlier, Bādarāyaṇa mentions in the Vākyānvayādhikaraṇa the views of three ancient *ācāryas*—Āśmarathya, Auḍulomi and Kāśakṛtsna on the question of the relation of *jīva* to Brahman. He rejects the theory of Āśmarathya and Auḍulomi who advance *bhedābheda* relationship and accepts the theory of Kāśakṛtsna according to which Brahman abides in the individual soul (*avasthiteḥ iti kāśakṛtsnaḥ*). Both Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja agree that the view expressed by Kāśakṛtsna represents Bādarāyaṇa's theory. The term *avasthiti* is, however, interpreted by Śaṁkara that Brahman itself exists as the individual self, whereas Rāmānuja takes it to imply that Brahman abides permanently in the individual self as its *antarātmā* or Inner Controller, as declared in the *Antaryāmī Brāhmaṇa*. In either case, Bādarāyaṇa is not in favour of *bhedābhedavāda* but some kind of *abhedavāda*.

The same view is expressed in the three *sūtras* of the Ahikuṇḍalādhikaraṇa. As explained in chapter 5, the analogies of the serpent and its coils and the luminous body and its light cited by Bādarāyaṇa are regarded by both Śaṁkara and Rāmānuja as prima facie views supporting *bhedābheda* relation and hence it is not acceptable to Bādarāyaṇa. His own view is stated in the *sūtra* reading as *pūrvavad vā* which means as pointed out in an earlier *sūtra*. According to Śaṁkara, it implies *abheda* or non-difference, while Rāmānuja understands it as the relation of the attribute (*viśeṣaṇa*) to the substance (*viśeṣya*). In either case, Bādarāyaṇa does not subscribe to the *bhedābhedavāda* but on the contrary, he is in favour of *abhedavāda*.

What is the nature of the *abhedavāda* that is conceived by Bādarāyaṇa? Is it absolute oneness or identity (*tādātmya*) as Śaṁkara conceives or is it oneness in the sense of a substance as integrally related to its attribue is one (*viśiṣṭa-vivakṣayā ekatva*), as Rāmānuja understands or is it non-difference in a figurative sense as similarity (*tat-sadṛśa*) between *jīva* and Brahman in respect of certain attributes, as Madhva interprets? This is a crucial question to which we have to find an answer in the *sūtra* so that we are able to determine the view of Bādarāyaṇa on the nature of the relationship between the three ontological entities. The Aṁśādhikaraṇa which directly deals with the question of the relation of *jīva* to Brahman and also the Ārambhaṇādhikaraṇa which discusses the causal relationship between Brahman and the universe provide the answer. Both these topics are discussed in detail in the chapters on *jīva* and the universe respectively. We shall only reiterate the important points.

Regarding the relation of *jīva* to Brahman, Bādarāyaṇa states explicitly that *jīva* is *aṁśa* of Brahman because of the description of difference (*nānā vyapadeśāt*) and the mention of non-difference (*anyathā ca*). The fuller implication of the relevant *sūtra* is to be taken note of. There are Upaniṣadic statements which speak of absolute difference between Brahman and *jīva*. There are also Upaniṣadic statements which speak of non-difference between them. Both these apparently conflicting statements have to be accepted as valid since it is not appropriate to take either only *abheda* Śrutis as of greater validity than the *bheda* Śrutis as Śaṁkara has done or *bheda* Śrutis are of greater validity than the *abheda* Śrutis as Madhva believes. If both the statements have to be treated as of equal validity, the only way of reconciling the conflict is to regard the relationship as that between *aṁśa* or *viśeṣaṇa* (attribute) and *aṁśi* or *viśeṣya* (substance). Keeping this in mind Bādarāyaṇa uses the term *aṁśa* in the *sūtra*. The concept of *aṁśa* with reference to *aṁśi* accommodates both difference and non-difference between *jīva* and Brahman from different standpoints. There is difference between them because by virtue of their intrinsic nature both are different. There is also non-difference between them because Brahman as inseparably related to *jīva* is one.

This meaning of the term *aṁśa* as brought out by Rāmānuja is also logically justified. According to Epistemology, a substance or *dravya* has two aspects: *viśeṣaṇa* or attribute and *viśeṣya* or substrate. An attribute cannot subsist by itself but it always inheres in the substrate. A substrate devoid of its attribute is also inconceivable. The redness of the flower, for instance, cannot exist by itself but it inheres in its substrate. Similarly, the flower devoid of its redness is inconceivable. The two together are inseparably related. This type of inherent or integral relation is termed as *apṛthak-siddhi* in the Viśiṣṭādvaita and as *samavāya* by the Naiyāyikas, as compared to the external relation named *saṁyoga* which is a separable relation. Wherever there is an inseparable relation, it is possible to conceive both difference and non-difference from different standpoints. Where there is absolute difference between two entities, it is not possible to conceive relation of non-difference. On the basis of this principle of logical principle, Bādarāyaṇa has advocated the theory of relationship between *jīva* and Brahman by employing the concept of *aṁśa-aṁśi bhāva* or the relation of attribute to the substance. The same concept is adopted by Rāmānuja for explaining the relationship between *jīva* and Brahman and also that between universe and Brahman by advancing the *śarīra-śarīri bhāva* or the relation of body to soul on the authority of the *Antaryāmī Brāhmaṇa* of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, the term *śarīra* being understood in the technical sense as that which is necessarily and at all times sustained by and controlled by the sentient Being.[1]

In the Ārambhaṇādhikaraṇa Bādarāyaṇa uses the term *ananyatva* to explain the causal relationship between the universe and Brahman. As explained in the chapter on the Universe, the word *ananyatva* implies that Brahman as the cause and the universe as its effect are non-different in the sense that the effect is a modified form of the same causal substance.

In view of all these facts as revealed by the relevant *Vedāntasūtras*, it may be concluded that Bādarāyaṇa does not subscribe to the theory of *bhedābhedavāda* of the type advocated by Bhāskara and Yādava of the older schools, as it involves self-contradiction. All the three commentators are agreed on this. Nor can it be said that he accepts *bhedavāda* or absolute dualism, as Madhva maintains, since Bādarāyaṇa also admits non-difference by using the terms *ananyatva* and *aṁśa* in the primary sense. It cannot also be said that Bādarāyaṇa advocates *abhedavāda* or *advaitavāda* in the sense of absolute oneness or identity (*tādātmya*) as conceived by Śaṁkara for the reason that the terms *ananya* and *aṁśa* employed by Bādarāyaṇa do not support it. The only plausible theory that is acceptable to Bādarāyaṇa is the *abhedavāda* in the sense of oneness of Brahman as organically related to the souls and the universe. In logical terms this concept of *abheda* may be expressed as *viśiṣṭa-abheda* or *viśiṣṭa-advaita*, as contrasted to the *kevala-abheda*. In other words, the system of Vedānta presented in the classic *sūtras* of Bādarāyaṇa can be classified as *Viśiṣṭa-abhedavāda*. From philosophical standpoint, it is Theistic

[1] See *supra*, p. 80, n. 1.

Monism. This Philosophy is well reflected in the system of Vedānta developed by Rāmānuja. A dispassionate study of the *Vedāntasūtra* leads to this conclusion. It is outside the scope of this book to discuss the relative merits of the different schools of Vedānta. However, it may be observed that a system which acknowledges the reality of the individual souls and the universe, the difference between the three ontological entities and also non-difference between them on the basis of an organic relationship is philosophically sound.

Glossary

Abheda: Non-difference.
Abheda-jñāna: Knowledge of the identity of *jīva* and Brahman.
Abheda Śruti: Scriptural texts speaking of the non-difference between *jīva* and Brahman.
Abhimāni-devatā: Presiding deity.
Abhiniṣpatti: Manifestation.
Abhivimāna: Transcending all limitation; all pervasive.
Abhyāsa: Repetition.
Ācārya: Preceptor.
Acetana: Non-sentient.
Acit: Non-sentient matter; primordial cosmic matter.
Adana: Eating.
Ādeśa: Teaching; instruction.
Ādhāra: That which serves as the ground or basis; the supporter.
Ādheya: That which is sustained; the supported.
Ādhibhūta: Material principles.
Ādhidaiva: Celestial beings.
Adhiloka: Other worlds.
Adhika: additional; different from.
Adhikaraṇa: Topical section comprising one or more *sūtras* dealing with a specific subject matter.
Adhiṣṭhāna: Substratum; objective basis for illusion (acc. *SB*).
Adhyāsa: Superimposition.
Adhyātma: Spiritual.
Adhyāya: A chapter in *Brahmasūtras.*
Adṛśeya: Imperceptible.
Adṛśyatvādhikaraṇa: Topic dealing with the subject of Brahman as imperceptible etc.
Advitīya: One without a second.
Āgama: Revealed scripture; treatises dealing with Pāñcarātra teachings.
Agni: Fire.
Ahamartha: The entity denoted by the notion of 'I'.

Ahaṁkāra: Egotism; an evolute of the *prakṛti.*

Ahikuṇḍalādhikaraṇa: The topic dealing with the analogy of serpent and its coils.

Aikya: Oneness; identity.

Aiśvarya: Lordship.

Ajaḍa: Sentient; spiritual.

Ajñāna: Ignorance; absence of knowledge.

Ākāśa: Cosmic ether; space.

Akhaṇḍārtha: Impartite and non-relational sense.

Akṣara: Imperishable; Brahman.

Akṣarādhikaraṇa: Topic dealing with Brahman as *akṣara.*

Akṣi: Eye.

Akṣi-puruṣa: The person inside the eye.

Amala: Pure; free from imperfections.

Aṁśa: A part; an integral part of a complex whole (acc. *RB*); close resemblance (acc. *MSB*); appearing as a part (acc. *SB*).

Aṁśādhikaraṇa: Topic dealing with *jīva* as an *aṁśa* of Brahman.

Aṁśin: Complex whole having parts; Brahman as organically related to *cit* and *acit* (acc. *RB*).

Anādi: That which has no origin.

Ānanda: Bliss.

Ānandamaya: Blissful.

Ānandamayādhikaraṇa: Topic dealing with Brahman as *ānanda-maya.*

Ānanda-svarūpa: That which is constituted of bliss.

Ananta: Infinite; that which is not conditioned by time, space and another entity.

Ananya: Non-distinct; non-difference; independent *kāraṇa* (acc. *MSB*).

Anāvṛtti: Non-return to bondage.

Anirvacanīya: Indeterminable; inexplicable.

Anṛta: Unreal; sin; *karma* that causes contraction of knowledge (acc. *RB*)

Antaḥkaraṇa: Internal sense-organ; mind.

Antara: Inside; within.

Antarāmyadhikaraṇa: The topic dealing with Brahman as *antaryāmin.*

Antarātmā: Indwelling Self; *Paramātman* as immanent in all beings.

Antarikṣa: Sky; mid-region.

Antaryāmin: The inner controller; the immanent Supreme Self which controls everything from within; Brahman.

Antastha: That which abides inside.

Aṇu: Monadic.

Aṇubhūti: Knowledge; transcendental consciousness (acc. *SB*).

Anumāna: Inference.

Anupapatti: Logical untenability.

Apaccheda-nyāya: The principle according to which what is later is to be accepted in preference to earlier.

Apahata-pāpma: Free from evil.

Apara: Lower.

Aparā-vidyā: Lower knowledge derived from the Vedas and other sacred texts (acc. *SB*); mediate knowledge (acc. *RB*); sacred texts which do not directly lead to the knowledge of Viṣṇu (acc. *MSB*).

Aparokṣa-jñāna: Intuitive knowledge of identity of *jīva* and Brahman (acc. *SB*); immediate knowledge of Brahman derived from meditation (acc. *RB*); direct vision of god (acc. *MSB*).

Apṛthag-bhūta: Not existing as separate.

Apṛthak-siddhi: Inseparability; integrally related as substance and attribute.

Ārambhaṇa: Origin or beginning with (acc. *SB*); being connected with speech (acc. *RB*); material stuff (acc. *MSB*).

Arūpa: Devoid of all forms; devoid of physical form (acc. *RB* and *MSB*).

Aśabdam: Not supported by scripture; inexpressible (acc. *MSB*).

Asādhāraṇa-dharma: Distinguishing characteristic; essential attribute.

Asat: Non-real, the non-existent (acc. *RB*); the cosmic matter in unmanifest form.

Asatkāryavāda: The theory of causality advocating that the effect does not exist in the cause.

Aspaṣṭa: Not clear.

Āśraya: Locus; basis.

Ativādī: One who surpasses everything else.

Ātmaikya-jñāna: Knowledge of the identity of *jīva* and Brahman.

Ātman: The Self; individual soul; also the *Paramātman*.

Attā: Eater; devourer of all (acc. *MSB*).

Avacchedavāda: The theory that *jīva* is the appearance of Brahman as conditioned by *antaḥkaraṇa*.

Avācya: Indescribable by words.

Avasthā: An accidental modification of a substance.

Avasthiti: Abiding of one thing in the other.

Avatāra: Incarnation of God.

Avedya: Unknowable; not being an object of another knowledge.

Avibhāga: Non-distinct; identity (acc. *SB*); non-difference in respect of *bhoga* enjoyed by *jīva* and Brahman (acc. *MSB*).

Avidyā: Ignorance; the cosmic principle which causes the appearance of Brahman as the universe (acc. *SB*).

Avikāra: Not subject to any change or modification.

Āvirbhāva: Manifestation.

Āvṛttiḥ: Repeated practice.

Avyaya: Unchangeable.

Ayatana: Abode; that which holds together; Brahman.

Āyuḥ: Life.

Baddha: Bound; the soul in bondage.

Bhakti: Devotion; unceasing loving meditation on God.

Bhakti-yoga: Unceasing meditation adopted as a direct *sādhana* to *mokṣa*.

Bhaṅga: Destruction; dissolution.

Bhāṣya: Commentary on *Vedāntasūtras.*

Bhautika: Constituted of physical elements.

Bhāvarūpa: That which is positive in character (as *ajñāna* in Advaita).

Bheda: Difference.

Bheda Śruti: Scriptural texts teaching difference between Brahman and *jīva*.

Bhedavāda: The theory emphasizing the difference between the ontological entities.

Bhedābheda: Difference-cum-non-difference.

Bhedābhedavāda: The theory upholding *bhedābheda* between two ontological entities.

Bhoga: Experience of bliss of Brahman.

Bhoktā: One who experiences; the individual self.

Bhrama: Error.

Bhūmā: Infinite; Infinitely great; infinite bliss (acc. *MSB*).

Bhūtākāśa: Physical ether.

Bhūta-yoni: Source of the universe.

Bimbapratibimbavāda: The theory that *jīva* is a reflection of Brahman in the internal organ.

Bimba-darśana: Direct vision of the image of God.

Brahmā: The Vedic deity entrusted with the task of the creation of the universe.

Brahman: The Ultimate Reality in Vedānta; the Supreme Being or God.

Brahma-loka: The abode of Brahman.

Brahma-sākṣātkāra: Realization of Brahman.

Brahma-vidyā: The spiritual knowledge of Brahman.

Buddhi: Intellect; internal organ; mind.

Caitanya: Consciousness.

Cakṣus: Eyes.

Caturmukha-Brahmā: Four-faced Vedic deity (Brahmā).

Cetana: Sentient entity; that which possesses consciousness.

Cid-acid-viśiṣṭa: Brahman as organically related to the souls and cosmic matter.

Cintana: Meditation; contemplation.

Cit: Sentient being; the individual self.

Dahara (also *Dharākāśa*): Subtle space; Brahman (acc. *SB* and *RB*); inside the subtle space (acc. *MSB*).

Daharādhikaraṇa: The topic dealing with Brahman as *daharākāśa.*

Dama: Self-restraint.

Dāna: Charity.

Darśana: Vision or the realization of the Self; specific type of meditation characterized with vividness (acc. *RB*); a system of philosophy.

Dhāraṇa: Concentration; sixth limb of *yogāṅgas.*

Dharma: Attribute; quality.

Dharmabhūta-jñāna: Knowledge as an essential attribute of the self; attributive knowledge.

Dharmī: Substrate; the substantive aspect of a *viśiṣṭa* entity.

Dhruvānusmṛti: Steadfast contemplation.

Dhyāna: Contemplation; meditation.

Dīpa: Light of the Lamp.

Dośa: Defect.

Draṣṭā: The seer; the *jīva.*

Dravya: Substance; that which serves as a substratum for modification.

Dṛṣṭānta: Illustration.

Duḥkha: Suffering; sorrow.

Dvaita: Dualism: The system of Vedānta founded by Madhva.

Dvaitavāda: The theory advocating absolute difference between different ontological entities such as *jīva* and Brahman.

Dyuḥ: Heaven.

Eka: One.

Ekatva: Oneness of Reality.

Gandha: Odour.

Gati: Movement.

Gauṇa: Secondary.

Gauṇārtha: Secondary meaning.
Guha: Cave; inner recess of heart.
Guṇa: Quality; attribute.
Heyaguṇa: Defiling qualities or attributes.
Heya-pratyanīka: Opposed to everything that is defiling.
Hiraṇmaya: Golden.
Hiraṇyagarbha: Vedic Deity entrusted with the function of creation.
Hita: Means to achieve the Supreme Goal.
Indriyas: Sense-organs.
Īkṣaṇa: The act of seeing or resolving.
Īśvara: God; the Supreme Self as the Ruler of all.
Itihāsa: The two epics—*Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata.*
Jaḍa: Inert matter.
Jagat: Material universe.
Jagat-kāraṇa: Primary cause of the universe.
Jala: Water.
Janma: Origin; birth.
Jijñāsā: Desire to know; enquiry into the nature of Brahman.
Jijñāsādhikaraṇa: The topic dealing with the enquiry into Brahman.
Jīva: Individual soul.
Jīvanmukti: Release of an Individual while he is still embodied.
Jīvātman: The individual self as distinct from Paramātman.
Jñāna: Knowledge.
Jñāna-svarūpa: Knowledge constituting the essence of the Self.
Jñāna-yoga: The spiritual discipline as the means to realization of the self.
Jñātā: The knowing subject; the soul as the knower.
Jnātṛtva: Knowership.
Jñeya: What is known; object.
Jyotis: Light.
Kalyāṇa-guṇa: Auspicious attributes.
Kartā: Agent of Action; the self as doer.
Kartṛtva: Process of action; activity.
Kāraṇa: Cause.
Karma: Action; ritualistic deeds; result of past deeds.
Karma-kāṇḍa: Portion of the Vedas dealing with rituals.
Karma-yoga: Observance of religious acts as means to self-realization.
Kṛti: Effort.
Kṛtsnapraśakti: Total Transformation.
Laya: Dissolution of the universe.

Laukika: Empirical.

Līlā: Sport.

Līlā-vibhūti: The universe as the property of *Īśvara.*

Liṅga: Identity mark; characteristic.

Mahat: The great; evolute of *prakṛti.*

Mahimā: Greatness.

Manana: Logical reflection.

Manas: Mind.

Martyam: Mortal.

Māyā: Cosmic principle which gives rise to the world-illusion (acc. *SB*); the phenomenal character of the universe; the primordial cosmic matter; that which is an instrument of wonderful creation (acc. *RB*).

Māyāvāda: The doctrine of the Advaita which advocates that everything other than Brahman is illusory.

Māyin: One who wields *māyā: Īśvara.*

Mithyā: Illusory.

Mithyātva: Illusoriness.

Mokṣa: Liberation of the soul from bondage; union with the Supreme Being.

Mṛt: Clay.

Mṛttikā: Made of clay.

Mukhyārtha: Primary meaning.

Mukta: One who is liberated from bondage; the liberated soul.

Mukti: State of final liberation from bondage.

Mūlaprakṛti: Primordial cosmic matter.

Mumukṣu: An aspirant for *mokṣa.*

Mūrta: Gross.

Nāmadheya: Designation by name.

Nāma-rūpa: Name and form.

Nānā: Manifold; plurality.

Nāna-vyapadeśa: Texts teaching in the primary sense that *jīva* is different from Brahman (acc. *RB*); texts referring to the (empirical) difference between Brahman and *jīva* (acc. *SB*); description of *jīva* in different ways (acc. *MB*).

Nayasūtra: Aphorism expressed in the form of logical reasoning.

Nididhyāsana: Steadfast meditation.

Nimitta-kāraṇa: The Instrumental or efficient cause.

Niravayava: Incapable of physical division; partless.

Nirdharmaka: Devoid of attributes.

Nirdoṣa: Defectless; free from all defilements.

Nirguṇa: Devoid of attributes; undifferentiated.

Nirguṇa Śruti: Scriptural text describing Brahman as devoid of qualities.

Nirupādhika: Unconditioned.

Nirvikalpaka: Indeterminate; devoid of all qualities.

Nirvikāra: Immutable.

Nirviśeṣa: Devoid of all characteristics; undifferentiated.

Niṣkala: Devoid of parts.

Niṣkriya: Devoid of activity; free from self-effort (acc. *RB*).

Nitya: Eternal.

Nitya-mukta: Soul that is eternally free from bondage.

Niyamana: Control.

Niyāmya: That which is controlled as in the case of *jīva* by *Īśvara*.

Niyantā: One who controls all beings; God.

Pāda: A section in the chapter of *Vedāntasūtra*; a part.

Pāñcarātra: Treatises dealing with the mode of worship and allied matters relating to Vaiṣṇavism.

Para: The higher; the Supreme.

Para Brahma: The ultimate reality; higher Brahman (acc. *SB*); the Supreme Person (acc. *RB*); Viṣṇu (acc. *MSB*).

Para bhakti: Perfected state of meditation serving as the direct means to *mokṣa*.

Parāk: That which manifests always to other as in the case of *jñāna*.

Paramapada: The eternal abode of God.

Parama-puruṣārtha: The Supreme Goal.

Pāramārthika: That which is absolutely real or transcendental (acc. *SB*); real.

Paraṁ-jyotis: The transcendental light; Brahman.

Parameśvara: Supreme God; Brahman.

Paramātman: The Supreme Self; Brahman; God.

Parā-vidyā: Higher Upaniṣadic knowledge leading to the realization of the identity of *jīva* with Brahman (acc. *SB*); direct knowledge of Brahman arising from unceasing meditation (acc. *RB*); sacred texts which lead to the knowledge of Viṣṇu (acc. *MSB*).

Parimāṇa: Dimension.

Pariṇāma: Evolution; Modification.

Pariṇāmavāda: The theory that accepts the evolution of Brahman into the universe.

Parokṣa: Mediate knowledge.

Phala: Fruit or result of an endeavour.

Pradhāna: The primordial cosmic matter (*prakṛti*) accepted in the Sāṁkhya system.

Prājña: The omniscient Brahman.

Prakāra: Mode of a substance; an attribute.

Prakārin: That which has modes or attributes; Brahman.

Prakāśa: Illumination.

Prakṛti: Primordial cosmic matter.

Pralaya: Dissolution of universe.

Pramāṇa: means of valid knowledge; evidence.

Prāṇa: Vital breath; also applicable to *jīva*.

Praṇava: The mystic syllable *aum*.

Praśāsana: Commanding (the power of).

Prasiddha: What is well established.

Pratibimba: Reflection; similar to (acc. *MSB*).

Pratijñā: Declaration; the statement to be proved.

Pratyak: That which reveals itself such as *jīva* and *Īśvara*.

Pratyakṣa: Perception.

Prayatna: Effort; endeavour.

Pṛthak: Distinct; separate.

Pṛthagadhikaraṇa: The topic dealing with the difference between *jīva* and Brahman (acc. *MSB*) and difference between *jīva* and Knowledge (acc. *SB* and *RB*).

Pṛthivī: Earth.

Puccha: Tail; the support.

Puṇḍarīka: Lotus.

Puruṣārtha: The goal of human endeavour.

Puruṣottama: The Supreme Person; Brahman.

Pūrvapakṣa: Prima facie view.

Rāga: Desire.

Rajas: One of the three qualities of *Prakṛti*.

Rakṣakatva: Power to protect.

Rasa: Taste.

Rūpa: Colour; form of an object.

Śabda: Sound; verbal testimony.

Sādhana: Spiritual discipline; means adopted to attain Brahman.

Sādharmya: Equality.

Sad-asad-vilakṣaṇa: Different from the real and the unreal; illusory.

Sad-vidyā: Meditation on Brahman as the *sat* without a second as taught in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*.

Saguṇa: Endowed with attributes.

Saguṇa Śruti: Scriptural statement describing Brahman as qualified with attributes.

Sahakārī kāraṇa: Accessory cause.

Śakti: Potency.

Samādhi: Final stage of eight-fold yoga discipline.

Samānādhikaraṇavākya: A sentence or judgement in which terms are found in apposition.

Sāmānādhikaraṇya: Syntactic equation of terms denoting the same entity but connoting different qualities.

Samanvaya: Concurrence with the main purport; proper exegesis (acc. *MSB*).

Saṁbandha: Relationship.

Samprasāda: State of deep sleep (acc. *SB*); *jīva* (acc. *RB*); blissful (acc. *MSB*).

Saṁsthāna: Structure of an object.

Saṁyoga: Conjunction; external relation.

Saṁvṛti: The principle conceived by the Buddhists to explain the phenomenal appearance of the manifold universe.

Sāmya: Equality.

Sandhyā: The state of dream.

Saṅkalpa: Will.

Sanmātra: Constituted of knowledge only.

Śarīra: Body; that which is necessarily supported by the self, controlled by it and subserves its purpose (acc. *RB*).

Śarīrin: The self of the *śarīra*; Brahman.

Śarīra-śarīri-saṁbandha: The organic relationship between Brahman and the universe of *cit* and *acit* (acc. *RB*).

Sarvagata: Omnipresent.

Sarvajña: Omniscient.

Sarva-śakti: Omnipotence; all-powerful God.

Sarvatra: Everywhere; everything in the universe (acc. *RB*).

Sarvātmā: Soul of all; Omnipresent (acc. *MSB*).

Sarvavit: Knower of everything.

Sat: Brahman.

Satkāryavāda: The theory of causality which maintains that effect exists in cause (acc. Sāṁkhya); the theory that an effect is the modified state of causal substance (acc. *RB*).

Sattā: Existence.

Sattva: One of the three qualities of *Prakṛti.*

Satya: Truth; Brahman as Reality (acc. *SB*); unconditioned existence of Brahman (acc. *RB*); that which causes, sustains, dissolves (acc. *MSB*).

Satyakāma: One whose needs are self-fulfilled.

Satya-saṅkalpa: One whose will is not obstructed.

Savikalpaka: Determinate; Differentiated.

Saviśeṣa: That which is characterized; Brahman as qualified with attributes.

Sāyujya: The state of *mokṣa* in which the individual self enjoys equal status with Brahman.

Śeṣa: One who exists for the purpose of *śeṣin.*

Śeṣin: One who utilizes the *śeṣa* for his purpose; God.

Setu: Causeway.

Siddhānta: Final view, the established conclusion.

Siddha-vastu: That which is already established or accomplished.

Smṛti: Texts based on revealed scripture such as Itihāsas, Purāṇas, etc.

Śravaṇa: Comprehending what is taught by a teacher.

Sthiti: Existence.

Sthūla: Gross; Manifested form.

Śuddhasattva: Spiritual substance characterized by unalloyed *sattva.*

Sukha: Happiness.

Sūkṣma: Subtle; unmanifest form.

Suṣupti: Dreamless state.

Sūtra: An aphorism; a concise aphoristic sentence expressed in a few words.

Sūtrakāra: The author of *Vedāntasūtras.*

Svabhāva: The nature of an object; essential characteristic of an object (acc. *RB*).

Svābhāvika: Natural form; unconditioned.

Svarūpa: Essential nature of an object.

Svarūpa-lakṣaṇa: Definition of an object in terms of its essential characteristics.

Svatantra: One who is independent such as Brahman.

Svayaṁ-prakāśa: Self-luminous; self-established (acc. *SB*).

Tādātmya: Absolute identity.

Tamas: One of the three qualities of *Prakṛti;* the primordial cosmic matter.

Tapas: Austerity.

Tarka: Logic.

Taṭastha-lakṣaṇa: Description of an object by means of identity marks.

Tattva: Metaphysical Reality; ontological entity.

Tejas: Splendour; the element of fire.

Tirodhāna: Concealment; obscuration.

Triguṇa: Three qualities—*sattva, rajas* and *tamas.*

Tyāga: Renouncement.

Ubhayaliṅga: Two modes of description of Brahman (acc. *SB*); twofold characteristic of Brahman (acc. *RB*); difference in respect of *svarūpa* of Brahman (acc. *MSB*).

Ubhayaliṅgādhikaraṇa: The topic dealing with Brahman as *ubhayaliṅga.*

Unmāna: Dimension.

Upādāna kāraṇa: Material cause.

Upadeśa: Teaching; instruction.

Upādhi: Adjunct; a limiting condition such as *avidyā.*

Upahita Brahma: Brahman as conditioned by *māyā.*

Upakrama: Commencement.

Upalabdhi: Comprehension.

Upalakṣaṇa: Qualification per accidence.

Upapatti: Logical tenability.

Upāsaka: One who performs meditation.

Upāsanā: Steadfast meditation; unceasing loving meditation on Brahman (acc. *RB*)

Upāya: Means to attain a goal.

Vairāgya: Non-attachment.

Vaiśvānara: The ruler of all souls; elemental fire; the digestive fire.

Vākyārtha-jñāna: Knowledge derived from the study of sacred texts.

Varṇāśrama-dharma: Religious duties prescribed according to caste and stages of life.

Veda: Revealed Scripture.

Vedana: Knowledge; *upāsanā* (acc. *RB*).

Vibhu: All-prevasive; infinite.

Vibhūti: Glory or property of Brahman.

Vidyā: Knowledge of identity of *jīva* and Brahman (acc. *SB*); *upāsanā* leading to the direct knowledge of Brahman (acc. *RB*); direct vision of God (acc. *MSB*).

Vijñāna: Knowledge.

Vijñātā: Knower.

Vikāra: Change; modification.

Virodha: Conflict; contradiction.
Viṣaya: Subject matter of discussion.
Viśeṣaṇa: Qualification per proprium.
Viśeṣya: The substrate for an attribute.
Viśiṣṭa: What is qualified.
Viśiṣṭa-abhedavāda: The theory upholding oneness of Brahman as *viśiṣṭa* or organically related to the *cit* and *acit.*
Viśiṣṭādvaita: The system of Vedānta associated with Rāmānuja who maintains that Brahman as organically related to *cit* and *acit* is one.
Viśiṣṭaikya: Oneness of substance as inseparably related to the attributes.
Vivarta: Illusory manifestation.
Vivartavāda: The theory adopted by Śaṁkara to account for the illusory manifestation of Brahman as the manifold universe.
Vyapadeśa: To mean in the primary sense.
Vyāpāra: Activity; function.
Vyatireka: Difference.
Vyāvahārika: Empirical.
Vyāvṛtti: Difference.
Yajña: Offering of sacrifice in the consecrated fire.
Yoga: Ethico-religious disciplines as means to attain spiritual goal.

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